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Volume 7

FROM NADIR SHAH TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC

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PREFACE

This volume treats aspects of Iran's history in the period between 1722 and 1979, which began with the collapse of the Safavid dominion after two centuries, and ended in the overthrow of Pahlavī rule after fifty-three years. Iran's vulnerable geo-political situation was signalled by the events that followed, once invasion from what is now Afghanistan had engulfed the Safavid capital, Isfahan, in 1722. Further invasions came from the Ottoman Empire in the west and from Russia in the north. To some it seemed inevitable that the revolution in 1979 would similarly invite invasion, and in 1981 it did, from Iraq. The 18th- and 20th-century episodes with which this volume opens and ends typify the repeated catastrophes characteristic of Iranian history, paramount and relatively stable governments alternating with periods of, in the past, regional autonomies and, as today, factionalism representative of divided authority and productive of great uncertainty.

Periods of regional autonomies have often been those of distinguished literary and artistic activity. Poets and annalists strove to keep alive cultural traditions salvaged from empires unfavourable to artistic freedom. That this should be so is less a paradox than it might seem. Stable government, over regions each with their own cultural traditions, meant repression to promote uniformity. When paramount government from a single centre was replaced by competing regional rulers from several, as this generally followed disasters across the whole land, it was in the regions, once some measure of peace was re-established, that traditional arts and crafts could be revived. Patronage of artists became a feature of competitive courts. At the same time, the sufferings of a nation never unaware of an overall cultural identity, especially in so far as this was enshrined in a shared and prized language capable of remarkable beauty of expression, occasioned literary artists' laments during interregna distracted by internecine warfare and the threat of foreign invasion. Extremely adverse material conditions encouraged a poetry which offered spiritual counsel combined with comprehension of the human predicament. A spiritual humanism, born of terrible experiences, served to remind people of the spirit within them and of their essential dignity, whatever indignities and cruelties they underwent.

The shock of disintegration on the fall of the Safavids was followed by Nādir Shāh's extravagant wars, when campaigns abroad were partly prompted by impoverishment at home. That Nādir Shāh failed lastingly to re-unite Iran, and

left it scarcely better than he had found it, augmented despair. How forlorn hopes had become may be gauged by the way in which Karīm Khān Zand's rule, over little more than a quarter of the country, has been seen as an interlude of unusual benignity. The subsequent Qājār conquest of the whole was, in comparison with what had preceded it, a not unwelcome settlement, in spite of the cruelties which accompanied its achievement.

This settlement, however, also produced despondency. Under the second Qājār ruler, territory which the Safavids had counted as theirs was seized by the Russians. Under the third and fourth, claims to Herat were unsuccessfully pursued and finally relinquished. Administrative arbitrariness and corruption continued prevalent: the hardships of the people were not greatly ameliorated. British and Russian intervention steadily increased. While both powers insisted that they sought to preserve it, on their own terms, the integrity of Iran was imperilled. Only a change of government in Russia, Iran's rejection of Lord Curzon's plans for what would, in effect, have made Iran a British protectorate, and the rise of a strong leader in Riżā Shāh gave Iran more tangible evidence of its independent identity than retention of its own language and distinctive Lion and Sun emblem.

The Qājārs, nevertheless, allowed Iranian traditions, good as well as bad, to continue. They did not make the error of the last Pahlavī ruler and permit tradition to be so jeopardised by alien influences that in the end the people rose to defend it. By 1979, the people wanted to return to norms and values which they understood, when those imported seemed not to profit but only to confuse them. Under the Qājārs, western dominance, while it furnished Iran with fair and, in the eyes of some, less than fair frontiers, had compelled Iranians to seek mastery of western ways the better to resist them. Yet from the Qājār period sufficient of the old culture survived for western novelties to be contained and to be a catalyst in an intellectual and literary revival, manifested in the Constitutional Movement of this century's first decade. Riżā Shāh's reign showed that even renewal of autocracy could be palliated by scholars and writers who, employing western techniques to good purpose, focussed attention on their country's rich artistic heritage. After 1941, the freedom which followed Riżā Shāh's departure, although darkened by foreign occupation until 1946, was conspicuous for works of literature and scholarly research. The resilience of Iran's creative and intellectual strength was again demonstrated.

This culturally promising interlude ended in 1953. Despondency and a failure of confidence among thinking men reappeared, in spite of developments which superficially and by western standards might have augured Iran's progress as an

increasingly affluent modern nation state. These developments were fatally marred. Expectations were aroused which could not be fulfilled. More dangerous was the risk that cherished traditions would be overwhelmed by what was considered progress, but conceived according to neither fully understood nor applicable foreign criteria, by the weight of repression and by the ubiquity of western agencies. Thus the turmoil in which the period treated in this volume ended is explicable in more than purely political and economic terms.

Cambridge and Dallas

P.W.A.
G.R.G.H.
C.P.M.

PART 1:
THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK, 1722–1979

CHAPTER I

NĀDIR SHĀH AND THE AFSHARID LEGACY

ORIGINS AND FRONTIER EXPERIENCES

The year 1688 has recently found acceptance as that of Nādir's birth,[1] but one of the best Iranian authorities for his time, the *Jahān-gushā-yi Nādirī* of Mīrzā Mahdī Khān Astarābādī, spells out A.H. 1110 as the year, and 28 Muḥarram as the day, which gives us 6 August A.D. 1698.[2] A Bombay lithographed edition[3] of Mīrzā Mahdī Khān's *Jahān-gushā* has A.H. 1100, but this date is not supported by manuscripts and the Tehran edition of the early nineteen sixties prefers the 1110 A.H. date. Other dates are given in other sources and are discussed by Dr Lockhart in his *Nadir Shah*, but it so happens that another contemporary source, the *ʿĀlam-ārā-yi Nādirī* of Muḥammad Kāẓim, the "Vazīr of Marv", gives A.H. 1109 as the year of conception and, although he does not give the precise date of birth, this date corroborates 1110 as the year of delivery.[4] It took place in the Darra Gaz, where a first-born and for some time only son was brought into the world for Imām Qulī, Nādir's father, in the fortress at Dastgird, a refuge for Nādir's people against the border raids from which the northern Khurāsān uplands frequently suffered.

Dastgird was in the winter quarters, where Nādir's father might have lingered on account of the expected birth. The summer-grazing was near Kupkān or Kubkān, thirty-eight kilometres southwest of the Dastgird-Chāpshalū winter-grounds in the low-lying, milder Darra Gaz, "Valley of Manna". Further to the east, on the margin of the Marv desert, lay Abīvard, the metropolis of this region and in Nādir's youth the seat of the Safavid agent or district governor. In those days this dignitary was an Afshār named Bābā ʿAlī Kūsa Aḥmadlū. The whole neighbourhood was predominantly Afshār, and Nādir's kin formed the Qiriqlū clan or sept of the Afshārs.[5]

The Afshārs had originally been a well-established tribal group of long standing in Turkistan,[6] whence they moved when the Mongols entered that

[1] Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, pp. 18, 20; but it is conceded that this date "may not be absolutely accurate".

[2] Mīrzā Mahdī Khān, p. 27; also a MS. in the author's possession, dated 1264/1848, fol. 18.

[3] Bombay, 1849 (cf. Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, p. 292ff. and 323).

[4] Muḥammad Kāẓim, vol. 1, fol. 6. [5] Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, p. 17. [6] *ibid.*

region in the 13th century. They migrated westwards and settled in Āẕarbāījān. During the early part of the Safavid era Khurāsān was subject to large-scale Uzbek raids, particularly serious when the Uzbeks were under the sway of the Shaibanid ʿAbd-Allāh ibn Iskandar, who died in 1598. He had made Bukhārā his capital and his power extended as far as Khwārazm, while his son, ʿAbd al-Muʾmin, was his Viceroy at Balkh. Although ʿAbd al-Muʾmin only survived his father by six months, during their lives the two men were the terror of Khurāsān, which was threatened from both Khwārazm and Balkh. It was not until Shāh ʿAbbās I (1588–1629) succeeded in ridding Khurāsān of this menace that he could turn his attention to his north-western frontier province of Āẕarbāījān.

There he had the Ottoman Turks to contend with and control of the area was not gained until 1606. He then followed a practice also used by his predecessors, Shāh Ismāʿīl (1501–24) and Ṭahmāsp I (1524–76), a combination of stiffening one frontier while carrying out a scorched-earth policy on another. The Āẕarbāījān borders were deprived of cultivators to make the advance of hostile armies more difficult, and the Khurāsān borders strengthened with people removed from Āẕarbāījān. Another factor which influenced the Safavids (1501–1732) may have been fear that such tribes as the Afshārs, whose language was Turkish, would be tempted to collude with the Ottomans; but such affiliations do not always, in the tribal context, justify such an expectation; Nādir was later to be disappointed by his reception from those of his Afshār kin who had remained in Āẕarbāījān.

For among the tribes removed in the seventeenth century from the Āẕarbāījān region, to be planted in Khurāsān and Māzandarān, were the Türkmen of Afshārs and Qājārs, and they were not remote in speech or habits from the major Türkmen threat on the frontiers which they were transplanted to guard. They were, however, considered loyal to the Safavids and counted within the fold of the Safavid Shīʿī sect, unlike the Sunnī Türkmens across the border. Besides these Afshārs and Qājārs, Kurds from the west were planted in Khurāsān, as was also a clan of the Bayāt. Shāh ʿAbbās is said to have transferred four thousand five hundred families of Afshārs from the Urmīya region to Abīvard and the Darra Gaz. After he had conquered in the vicinity of Erzerum, he sent nearly thirty thousand families of Kurds to settle round Khabūshān. Their number gave them a preponderance of which Nādir Shāh was well aware. A group of Qājārs from the Tabrīz district was settled in Marv. Qājārs from Ganja and the Qarābāgh were sent to Astarābād. A section of the Bayāt from Erivan was placed in Nīshāpūr. Thus a string of peoples was planted across

Khurāsān whose capacity for unity and disunity had considerable bearing on Nādir's rise to power and the efforts required to retain it. He died on his way to Khabūshān to suppress a Kurdish rising.

Iranian exiles in India, when they wrote about Nādir's antecedents, tended to exalt them. They were writing under Indian patrons in the land which had witnessed Nādir's humiliation of the Mughul Emperor Muḥammad Shāh, and they were compatriots of Iranians who had been ruled by a self-made Shah. Not to add insult to the Indians' injury nor to emphasize the debasement of fellow Iranians' thraldom, a writer like Muḥammad Shafīᶜ Tihrānī in his *Nādir Nāma* awards Nādir the dignity of being the son of an Afsharid Sardār, one of the high officers of the "Sulṭān" of Abīvard.[7] James Fraser, whose sources were for the most part Indian, also gives Nādir a father of rank in the Afshār community.[8] Other fashions make for other kinds of selection. Although he speaks of Nādir's own habit of making contradictory claims, and of confusing differences in accounts of Nādir's ancestry, Jonas Hanway plumps for the more humble version, and Lockhart, who incidentally echoes one of Hanway's asides, also considers Nādir's birth not of the quality for its having taken place in a "castle" to be plausible.[9] It is improbable that the *qalᶜa* at Dastgird was anything of the order of a castle. It was probably simply a tower, or a farmyard with walls and bastions.

Hanway makes Nādir's father very poor indeed, but if we follow Muḥammad Kāẓim's account, it may be seen just how poor or, how comparatively well-off Nādir's father was as a herdsman. As for Mīrzā Mahdī Khān, in the earlier passages of his book he was not in a position to offend Nādir, his master, with flattery totally devoid of truth, nor to insult him with a degrading lineage. He tells the well known story about the strength of the sword lying in its temper, not in the vein whence the metal came; but he also says that the first name given Nādir was that of his grandfather.[10] This point in an Iranian context is important. Nādir had a known grandfather: he was a man of a recognized family.

His original name has generally been taken as *Nadr Qulī*, "Slave of the Unique". In his article on Nādir Shāh in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* Minorsky avoids the issue, but in his *Esquisse d'une Histoire de Nader-Chah*,[11] he prefers the spelling which occurs in several of the manuscripts of Mīrzā Mahdī Khān's *Tārīkh-i Jahān-gushā*. It differs from the uncommon word *nadr* by one point only, to give *naẕr*. Naẕr Qulī would mean "Slave of the Votive Promise" and is

[7] Tihrānī, *Tārīkh-i Nādir Shāhī*, p. 4. [8] *History of Nadir Shah*, p. 71–2.
[9] Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, p. 20. [10] Mīrzā Mahdī Khān, p. 27. [11] Paris, 1934.

intriguing because of Muḥammad Kāẓim's somewhat lengthy account of how Imām Qulī had been mysteriously prepared for the coming of his first-born and longed-for son. The name suggests a boon received after votive exercises in quest of it.

Muḥammad Kāẓim merely says the boy was called *Nādir*, "Prodigy", from the start because as a baby he at once displayed the development of a three-year old. He generally refers to Nādir in the early years as *Nādir-i Daurān*, "Wonder of the Ages". Apart from Kāẓim, it is generally accepted that he was Naẕr or Nadr Qulī Beg until he was made Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān by Shāh Ṭahmāsp in reward for services: "the slave and Khān of Ṭahmāsp". He retained these titles, by which he was generally known among Europeans, until he became king. Then, as Minorsky put it, he "improved" on his old name by changing it to *Nādir*.

Muḥammad Kāẓim is far more explicit about Nādir's father than other writers are. He was a decent, God-fearing man with two brothers, Begtāsh and Bābur. Each of the three possessed six to seven thousand head of sheep and ten to fifteen cows. Muḥammad Kāẓim had a taste for marvels and they often stood him in good stead as substitutes for more circumstantial details in his narrative when he either lacked the facts or preferred not to express them. His skill in the devices of an epic prose style was less developed than the gifted and learned Mahdī Khān's. Moreover, he is frequently too colloquial, often using direct speech, to be able to sustain conceits, flattery, or disguises, however thin, of the truth. His taste for the miraculous must be borne with, especially when it may point to another version of events, or indicate dates, with which he is sparing. Fortunately, he is less so with financial details: he makes Nādir's meticulousness over accounts quite explicit.

Determined appropriately to herald Nādir's birth, Kāẓim describes Imām Qulī's twice-witnessed dream, which his brother Begtāsh also saw. Kāẓim makes Imām Qulī, such a vague entity in other sources, strikingly real. The shepherd puts on his posteen to go out and watch the sheep in the Chāpshalū winter pastures. Out for three days and nights, he indulges in prayer and meditation, exercises to which he was apparently prone. On the night of 23 Ramażān, a Sabbath Eve, in 1087 (9 November 1676) he has a dream, repeated the next night. He sees a sun whose radiance covers the whole earth and which rises from his own collar. It sets in the district of Khabūshān. He thinks that if he told them of this vision people would take him for mad, but when he found that his brother had had the same dream about him, the two men were emboldened to

seek an interpretation from a "poor village mulla". The *mullā* gave them the obvious interpretation, even to the world-conqueror's death near Khabūshān.[12]

When the prodigy was eventually born, Imām Qulī doted on him. By his tenth year he was a good horseman, practised in archery, javelin-throwing, hunting and horse-racing. His brother Ibrāhīm was not born till some time after; Nādir, from a small segment of a tribe and from a family which does not appear to have been excessively fertile, was to a significant degree concerned with the continual acquisition of men to serve under his banner.

Writers on Nādir Shāh to whom the first part of Muḥammad Kāẓim's book was unavailable have been at pains to state how little is known about Nādir's early life, but have lent currency to several stories. In Lockhart, Nādir had a biographer who rejected many of the legends but remained uncertain about the tale that Nādir was for a time a robber. Muḥammad Kāẓim, to whom the terms 'bandit' or 'robber' would not mean quite what they did to Lockhart, gives no evidence of Nādir's banditry. What Nādir often had to do was to retrieve cattle, captives and goods stolen in border raids: rather than being one himself, he seems to have spent many of his early years pursuing robbers. Indeed the more plausible thesis, applicable to many stages of his career, might be that he was on the side of merchants, bandits' most likely victims. The rise of a strong ruler in Iran may often have had more to do with the support of operators of caravan routes than such a ruler's annalists trouble to reveal, either from a desire not to link their champion with the mercantile classes, or because what most people would already know needs no telling. Muḥammad Kāẓim was probably of this opinion: his evidence for Nādir as the friend of merchants is scanty, but what there is signifies much.

One of the legends Lockhart rejects is Hanway's story of Nādir's capture at the age of seventeen or eighteen by Uzbeks. His mother died in this captivity, but he escaped. No Iranian source seems to corroborate this episode, but Hanway must have got it from somewhere and Kāẓim relates two incidents that, coalesced or garbled, might have given rise to Hanway's version.

The first incident was that out hunting Nādir chased a wild ass till he was lost and his mount exhausted. An old woman, mysterious enough to suit Kāẓim's pen, succoured him and gave him special advice. On his return, the boy, thus refreshed and peculiarly empowered, met a party of Türkmen raiders marching home across the border with five hundred of his father's sheep and two or three

[12] Muḥammad Kāẓim, vol. 1, p. 22 (fol. 5b).

of his cows as well as human captives. Nādir fought off the raiders and retrieved the captives.

The second episode was later. Nādir was already in the service of Bābā ʿAlī, the governor of Abīvard. He had been into the Chāpshalū district to bury his father and uncle Bābur. On his return towards Abīvard, he and his party stopped by a spring. While they were asleep a group of Yamūt Türkmens, the plague of Astarābād further to the west, surprised them. This time Nādir and his companions were captured, but one of them escaped to reach Bābā ʿAlī with the bad news. Bābā ʿAlī Beg set out with a small force on a two-day pursuit which was unsuccessful, but one night Nādir, whom Bābā ʿAlī would have had to ransom from enslavement, prayed for release. His fetters fell away like cobwebs. He liberated his friends and surprised his captors, whose loot he brought back to Abīvard. It is not difficult to see how allegations that Nādir also was sometimes a robber might arise; but the tale about the fetters falling off like cobwebs deserves further comment.

It may hide a significant fact that Nādir, until very near the end, and except at certain major turning-points in his career, was nearly always a temporiser, by no means contemptuous of diplomacy. His passion for collecting and hoarding manpower made him more often than not conciliatory towards defeated enemies, particularly when they paid up, and provided that he had no longstanding grievance against them. He seldom failed to enlist large numbers of the vanquished into his service, in order to create the army whose final unwieldiness helped to break him and ruin Iran. The fact which the legend may conceal is that the fetters did not fall off as the result of prayers to the Almighty, but following some nocturnal parley between Nādir and his gaolers, during which he may have promised them a share in future enterprises. They were, after all, of his own tongue; but this would not be a version of the story Kāẓim needed to expose. His readers could draw their own conclusions.

Joining Bābā ʿAlī Beg Kūsa Aḥmadlū's service, at first as a *tufangchī*, (musketeer), was certainly a major turning-point in Nādir's career. It meant handling some of the more sophisticated weapons of the day and in the service of a man who, as will be mentioned below, was apparently a properly appointed royal governor, and himself an Afsharid. He had heard of Nādir's prowess and summoned him; and it seems likely that the boy was in any event fairly close kin to Bābā ʿAlī. After a period as tufangchī, he was raised to the dignity of *Īshīk Bāshī*. In terms of the Safavid Court at Iṣfahān the Īshīk Āqāsī Bāshī was a very high officer, similar to High Chamberlain. In Bābā ʿAlī's entourage, the terms "muster-master" or "sergeant-at-arms" might fit. Bābā ʿAlī Beg's function as

governor of Abīvard was, as Mīrzā Mahdī Khān says, always to be "engaged in battle against hostile Afsharids, Türkmens, Kurds and Uzbeks".[13] Kāẓim seems to reflect tribal lays and ballads when he describes Bābā ʿAlī's new henchman in encounters with these raiders. These skirmishes culminated in a serious clash which involved Bābā ʿAlī in person against a Yamūt Türkmen force given as eight thousand strong and led by a certain Muḥammad ʿAlī known as the Fox, who attempted to overrun Abīvard and Darra Gaz. The Fox was worsted and fourteen hundred prisoners taken, an event of sufficient importance for news of it to be conveyed to Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain (1694–1722) at Iṣfahān. Kāẓim makes Nādir, as bearer of the good tidings, have his first sight of the Safavid capital, where he was rewarded by the Shah with a hundred *tūmāns*, no mean gift.[14]

Bābā ʿAlī is reported to have cemented the paternal aspect of his patronage of Nādir by marrying the boy's widowed mother. Nādir thus gained two half brothers, Fatḥ ʿAlī and Luṭf ʿAlī. Mīrza Mahdī says that Nādir conceived the notion of more intimately allying himself with Bābā ʿAlī by marrying his daughter. As Lockhart perceived, there is almost certainly no truth in the version that makes Nādir hostile to his first master; but his desire to marry his daughter aroused the opposition of other Afsharid chiefs, jealous of the young man's increasing influence. Fighting broke out and several of the envious chiefs were slain before the nuptials were completed. This union's first fruit was Riżā Qulī, born according to Mīrzā Mahdī Khān in 1131/1719, according to Muḥammad Kāẓim, in 1125/1713–14.

Mahdī Khān says that the first wife died after five years. Nādir married her sister, by whom he had two sons, one later named Naṣr-Allāh, the other Imām Qulī. Kāẓim is correct, although he does not differentiate the mothers, when he says that the first of these two sons was originally called Murtażā Qulī and only styled Naṣr-Allāh after the capture of Qandahar; but he dates Naṣr-Allāh's birth 1128/1715–16, which makes Nādir a very youthful father by western standards; Nādir must have been adopted into Bābā ʿAlī's household at a very early age, but fatherhood at fifteen or sixteen would not be too young in such a situation, especially if male progeny were a need.

In his *Durra-yi Nādirī*, "The Nadiric Pearl", Mīrzā Mahdī Khān of Astarābād gives the year 1136/1723–4 as the beginning of Nādir's world-conquering exploits. Since, following promotion in Bābā ʿAlī's service, Nādir's assumption of control over the natural fortress of Kalāt might be taken as the next turning point in his career, it would be useful to be able to date it. Persian sources do not

[13] Mīrzā Mahdī Khān, p. 28. [14] Muḥammad Kāẓim, vol. 1, fol. 9b.

help over this, but Hanway dates the seizure of Kalāt in 1721, which may not be far wrong. His account of the episode, however, does not ring true, but it is again possible to discern how he might have arrived at it. As has been said already, there is no reason to suspect discord between Nādir and Bābā ᶜAlī, who, as Lockhart pointed out, had sons, notably Kalb ᶜAlī, faithful in Nādir's service long after their father's death. Kāẓim, whose service was mostly under Nādir's brother Ibrāhīm and Ibrāhīm's son, so that he is often a detached observer of Nādir himself and not given to flattering him, gives no hint that Bābā ᶜAlī ever wavered in the realization that in the Qiriqlū boy he had a strong arm of great value.

A further consideration is that Mahdī Khān confessedly restricts himself to only a summary of Nādir's early days and affrays with "Turk and Tajik, near and far", by which Nādir the frontiersman "tamed those people and introduced tranquillity to the borders".[15] Kāẓim, on the other hand, narrates the incidents and names the people behind Mahdī Khan's summary treatment of clashes with the fickle Kurds, Türkmens of other clans, and also rival Afshārs. The enemies were by no means always from beyond the Safavid frontier with Central Asia. Mahdī Khān says that local rivals, even powerful fortress-holding Afshārs, had recourse to Malik Maḥmūd of Sīstān, the captor of Mashhad, to raise obstacles in the way of Nādir's rise to power, while in Darra Gaz, in Abīvard itself, Kurds were hostile to the same purpose, combining with their kinsmen from Khabūshān. It is significant that Mahdī Khān places his outline of these events in a general excursus which is the sequel to Nādir's acquisition of the "Kalāt-i Nādirī", a saucer-shaped plateau some twenty miles long from west-north-west to east-south-east, and from five to seven miles wide, surrounded by a rim of limestone cliffs sheer on the outside and rising from seven hundred to eleven hundred feet in height: the perfect natural fortress.

When Kāẓim says Nādir was out hunting in Kalāt and discovered Tīmūr's buried treasure there and an inscription prophesying its discoverer's future glory, he is merely introducing Tīmūr in association with a strong point with which, in any event, this name was historically associated; and in association with a strong man who was pleased to connect his own achievements with those of Tīmūr, whom he believed was of the same race as himself. As for the treasure, that lay not in chests of specie or jewels, but in the control of such a bastion, dominating the Darra Gaz to the northwest of it, Abīvard to the southeast, and the Atak plain below Khurāsān's mountain frontier, and the route from

[15] Mīrzā Mahdī Khān, p. 29–30.

Mashhad into Turkestan. To possess it was certainly an advantage to be treasured and it might have been when Nādir had control of Kalāt that enemies and rivals decided to try conclusions with the ambitious Īshīk Bāshī before it was too late. It is at this juncture that Kāẓim relates that Bābā ʿAlī deputed all his powers to Nādir who, the narrative continues, occupied himself preparing horses, ordnance and arms until the news of Maḥmūd Ghilzai's victories came – a piece of evidence which accords with Hanway's dating of the beginning of the "Kalāt Period" to *circa* 1720–1.

The two main Persian-language accounts preface the history of Nādir Shāh with observations on the stricken state of Iran after the collapse of the Safavid empire. Nādir is introduced as Iran's saviour. Both these sources provide detailed comment on the pretenders to the Safavid throne who appeared between 1722 and the 1750s. Besides such appearances affording additional evidence for how distracted conditions were, they prove how the people were inclined to cling to the memory of the Safavid monarchy and desire its continuation or revival.[16] Its aura remained although, before 1722 even, its strength had been depleted by, among other things, ill-conceived and conflicting counsels offered a weak ruler in a contentious Court.

This husk of sovereignty finally crumbled when Maḥmūd Ghilzai of Qandahar entered the capital, Iṣfahān, on 25 October 1722 after a six-month siege. Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain, who had been on the throne since 1694, abdicated and Maḥmūd assumed the insignia of ruler. The ex-Shah was decapitated in 1726 on the orders of Maḥmūd's cousin, his successor, Ashraf (1725–29). Proof of the importance provincial authorities attached to the upholding of the Safavid monarchical institution is furnished by the appeals sent to Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain during the siege of Iṣfahān for him to ensure the escape of one of his sons, to be a rallying point for resistance to other invaders and to ensure the dynasty's survival. The Shah's third son, Ṭahmāsp Mīrzā, was smuggled out of the city in June 1722. This was the prince whose servant Nādir later became and Nādir's rise to power might be attributed to the Ghilzai invasion and the awful challenge it presented.

This episode opened when in 1709 a Ghilzai Afghan notable, Mīr Vais, overthrew the Safavid governor of Qandahar who was a Georgian convert to Islam, originally Giorgi XI and known in his converted state as Gurgīn or Shāhnavāz Khān. He was a valued *ghulām* in the Safavid service because of his military skills and sent to Qandahar in 1704, to secure Iran's bastion against

[16] For a useful treatment of these Safavid pretenders, see Perry, "The last Safavids, 1722–1773".

Mughul India and prevent local unrest among the Afghans. Iṣfahān was rent by factions in the Court of a ruler the historians describe as both other-worldly and inept. A centre which manifested signs of declining power found increasing difficulty in holding outlying provinces in subjection. To send Gurgīn Khān to Qandahar might have been a positive move but his personality nullified it. His treatment of the local people precipitated disaster; sent to prevent rebellion breaking out he punished the Afghans "as severely as if they had carried their designs into execution", as Malcolm says.[17] Krusinski, however, explains that Gurgīn operated as the Court had instructed, to deprive the Mughul government in India of any claim or justification upon which to base an incursion. This meant that he had to keep the Afghans in check, especially to prevent them from raiding Mughul territory.[18] It is only when he is citing Mīr Vais's remarks to the anti-Gurgīn faction at Court that Krusinski repeats terms as opprobrious about the governor as any used by Kāẓim; they are quite contrary to what Krusinski reports Mīr Vais as telling Gurgīn's supporters in Iṣfahān.[19] Krusinski is demonstrating Mīr Vais's cunning and how the factionalism round the Shah gave him scope to exercise it.

Muḥammad Kāẓim describes Gurgīn as considering himself unaccountable at Qandahar, drinking heavily, and lusting for girls to the extent that he sent men to fetch Mīr Vais's beautiful daughter. According to this historian it was over this impropriety that Mīr Vais, a man of standing in his area, set out for the Court to complain. Krusinski differs and says Gurgīn sent this popular local notable to Iṣfahān "not indeed as a prisoner", but to distance him from followers over whom his influence might be dangerous. Mīr Vais's six-month sojourn in Iṣfahān procured him neither the dismissal of the governor nor any redress, but he went on the Pilgrimage to Mecca and from there returned directly to Qandahar armed with a *fatvā*, a canon-law decree, from the Sunnī religious authorities in the Holy City, that sanctioned his throwing off Shīʿī-Safavid dominion exercised through an immoral governor of dubious credentials as a Muslim.[20] On his return home Mīr Vais is alleged to have told his followers about the disorganized state of affairs in Iṣfahān, with the inference that subservience to such a venal government need not be tolerated. Gurgīn was murdered. The rebels made Mīr Vais their governor, but he died only very few years later, in 1715, without taking his rebellion into metropolitan Iran. The religious element in the Sunnī Mīr Vais's anti-Safavid propaganda deserves to be

[17] Malcolm, *History*, vol. I, p. 602.
[18] Krusinski, *The History of the Revolution of Persia*, p. 152. [19] *ibid.*, p. 156–7.
[20] Cf. Chapter 19, p. 706.

borne in mind in relation to both Nādir Shah's later policy over religion and any scruples he might have had over finally extinguishing the Safavid line.

After an interlude under Mīr Vais's brother, who was ineffectual, the government of Qandahar was seized by Mīr Vais's son, Maḥmūd. He made capital out of his uncle ᶜAbd al-ᶜAzīz's proposal to submit to Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain and out of the fact that the latter was preoccupied by a revolt of the Abdālī tribe of Afghanistan at Herat, to stage a *coup* successfully to oust his father's designated successor. Meanwhile the Abdālīs' rebellion was an instance of the "restlessness" of the Afghans, to which Krusinski alludes more than once, nearer to Nādir's northern habitat than was Qandahar in the latitudes of the Iranian cities of Kirmān, Yazd and Iṣfahān. The Abdālī brothers, ᶜAbd-Allāh and Zamān Khān, were disaffected with Maḥmūd Ghilzai and their purpose was to take Herat from its Safavid governor. This threatened the capital of Khurāsān, Mashhad, of which the governor responded to the plea of his colleague in Herat by raising levies from his province. Bābā ᶜAlī provided a five-hundred strong levy from Abīvard and marched with it leaving Nādir behind as his deputy. Bābā ᶜAlī was sent on a forward patrol. When the Afghans made a surprise attack, near Chāsht Sulṭānī, Bābā ᶜAlī was killed and his men retreated to Mashhad. Jaᶜfar Khān, the governor of Herat, capitulated to the victors before the end of 1716.

Bābā ᶜAlī's brother, Qurbān ᶜAlī, was raised in his stead over Abīvard and about the same time complaints were brought to the Afsharid chiefs about the inroads of the Tekke Türkmens who were seizing the petitioners' womenfolk and cattle. This was an appeal to Shīᶜī Afsharid braves (*ghāziyān*) for protection and redress from predators who as Sunnīs considered the enslavement of Shīᶜī captives, or at least the subjects of a Shīᶜī government, legal since they regarded these people as heretics. There was a lesson in this for Nādir, as a man of this vulnerable frontier, learning the effect on its inhabitants of a sectarian difference due to what he himself later termed the Safavids' "heresy".

Qurbān ᶜAlī, who was probably already terminally ill, referred these appeals to Nādir. With Bābā ᶜAlī's son, Kalb ᶜAlī Beg, Nādir defeated the raiders and returned in triumph, and in time for Qurbān ᶜAlī's obsequies, to Abīvard. Indicative of the ostensibly Shīᶜī nature of Nādir's youthful environment is the fact that Qurbān ᶜAlī's body was taken to Mashhad, a shrine city sacred to the Shīᶜa, for burial. A new governor was sent for Abīvard from Iṣfahān and, if Kāẓim's chronology can be accepted, this Ḥasan ᶜAlī Khān must have reached Abīvard in about 1720: Kāẓim says that disaster befell Iṣfahān in his second year of office.

On arrival at Abīvard, Ḥasan ʿAlī Khān sent Nādir with a force of Safavid troops bent on another of the several attempts made to regain Herat, a prize ultimately reserved for Nādir. On this occasion, his commander was Ṣafī Qulī Khān Ziyādughlū, who, Kāẓim says, called in the "Atak Army", the Abīvard-based frontier force whose creation may be attributed to Bābā ʿAlī and Nādir in a combined effort of several years' duration. Ṣafī Qulī Khān detached Nādir to divert the Abdālīs with an attack on their other centre at Farāh. At this moment news of an invasion by numbers of Türkmens and Uzbeks under Shīr Ghāzī Khān of Khiva caused a quick change of plan. Nādir encountered Shīr Ghāzī Khān's force near Jām. Joined by Ṣafī Qulī Khān, he participated in the routing of Shīr Ghāzī Khān, so that the Herat campaign could be resumed.

The Abdālīs proved more formidable than the recent raiders had done. They defeated the Qizilbāsh near Kāfir Qalʿa, where Ṣafī Qulī Khān misdirected his gunners and decimated his own infantry, enabling the Afghans to break his line. Ṣafī Qulī Khān, Kāẓim says, was considered mad. He blew himself up on a powder-barrel. Nādir extricated his men and safely returned to Abīvard.

Kāẓim makes the Abdālī seizure and successful retention of Herat the spur to Maḥmūd Ghilzai of Qandahar's decision to mount his far deeper inroads into the Safavid Empire. Having taken this decision, Maḥmūd wrote to Malik Maḥmūd of Sīstān to ask for support, even if only token support. The Malik prevaricated, but said he would consider joining Maḥmūd Ghilzai once the latter had succeeded in establishing himself in central Iran.

When the Court sought help for the relief of Iṣfahān, the answer was in general apathetic or pusillanimous. The Bakhtiyārī tribes, for whom Iṣfahān was the nearest city and market, proved an exception: the capital was too important in their economy for them to neglect it in its worst hour. Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Qājār, governor of Astarābād on the Caspian, was apparently another exception, although the veracity of the incident has been doubted. He managed to pass the besiegers' lines by night, it is said, and recoup the royal army for a battle, but his success excited the jealousy of the Shah's generals, who sought to have him arrested by insinuating that were he to defeat Maḥmūd, he would curtail the Shah's powers. Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān made his escape with his force, at the time when the Shah's third son Ṭahmāsp Mīrzā had been smuggled out of the beleaguered city. Some annalists give credit to the rumour that the Shah's second son, Ṣafī Mīrzā, was also sent away safely from Iṣfahān, to reappear subsequently as one of the claimants to the Safavid throne.

Ḥasan ʿAlī Khān, the Safavid appointee to Abīvard, eventually withdrew to Māzandarān in an exit which seems to have been occasioned by realization of his

lack of standing in contrast to the growing influence of Nādir. As disturbances were spreading in Khurāsān with the demise of the central government in Iṣfahān, a *sauve qui peut* situation must have developed in which the withdrawal of an outsider, the agent of a no longer effective capital, would be explicable, especially in 1722 or 1723.

Malik Maḥmūd of Sīstān, who hesitated to join forces with Maḥmūd Ghilzai in the attack on Iṣfahān, took advantage of the disorders in Khurāsān to play a rôle which is important for the attempt to reconstruct Nādir's early career and in particular that part of it on the eve of and just after his joining Ṭahmāsp Mīrzā. Malik Maḥmūd and his brother, Malik Isḥāq, were from Sīstān and claimed Kayānid descent from ancient legendary Kayānid princes of Iran, although they appear to have been no more than Sīstānī notables who seized the opportunity provided by the fall of the Safavid state to satisfy their own territorial ambitions. Malik Mạhmūd's exploits do in fact illustrate a tendency for Iranian unity to disintegrate when a powerful central government ceases to be effective; also they furnish a glimpse into the latent forces of opposition to a paramount power which the latter might keep in check, but only so long as it shows no sign of wavering.

For present purposes, Maḥmūd of Sīstān's encounters with Nādir Abīvardī made the next turning point in Nādir's career. After he had rebuffed Maḥmūd Ghilzai, the Malik acted as if to verify an offer of renewed allegiance he made to the stricken Shah by appearing to set out to help Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain with a body of some four thousand men. Hearing that Maḥmūd Ghilzai was soon to take Iṣfahān, and receiving a present from him of two camel-loads of silk and cash and jewels, he sent his brother to raid the Khurasanian town of Sabzavār and himself took a more easterly route through Ṭabas and Tūn, recruiting more men as he proceeded towards what he then saw as his destined prize, Mashhad.

The Safavid authorities in Mashhad had been unable to control the confusion which broke out there when news of the fall of Iṣfahān became known. The governor was killed by a party of assailants which supported a certain Ḥājjī Muḥammad whom one source names, more evocatively in an Iranian context, as Mullā Naurūz, the Mullā of the New Day or New Era. He was one of a group of outlaws from the hills round the city. A crowd of ruffians recognized him as their Pahlavān or champion. Their attack on the government precincts encompassed, besides the murder of the governor, that of such officials as the inspector of weights and measures and a senior revenue assessor. It is easy to see who were the main targets of hatred. Pahlavān Ḥājjī Muḥammad distributed these officers' possessions among his followers and declared himself the ruler of Mashhad.

News of Malik Maḥmūd's approach filled him with such alarm that he wrote to the Malik and promised loyalty. This was, however, only a feint: he planned to lure Malik Maḥmūd into the city and then put him to death. The Malik saw the stratagem but decided to play the Ḥājjī's game. The Ḥājjī and leading citizens went out to meet Malik Maḥmūd. It was at this stage that the Ḥājjī had hoped to be able to do away with the Malik, but Malik Maḥmūd was careful to keep his guard closely packed around him. Once Malik Maḥmūd was in the city, the Ḥājjī also had his own abode well-guarded. Malik Mahmūd took up residence in the former governor's quarters and when he held his first reception, the Ḥājjī entered with a show of sovereign pomp. He expected to be treated as the Malik's ally, but Maḥmūd told each of the notables to be seated in the places they had been accustomed to under Safavid governors. The Ḥājjī, of course, had no such seat. He found a place in the end, but shame and anger quickly drove him from the assembly to his house. After a pretence at showing conciliation, Malik Maḥmūd had the pleasure of witnessing the Ḥājjī's desertion by his supporters in the city, and his enforced retreat to his mountain village. Malik Isḥāq was sent to try cajolery, but the Ḥājjī's determination to make a stand meant that he had to be blasted out of his stronghold with cannon. He surrendered, was executed and his body publicly exposed. Malik Maḥmūd had probably not wanted the matter to come to this point because popular feelings might have been involved, but the Ḥājjī's resistance left him no alternative but to use the artillery upon which, as Nādir was soon to learn, he heavily relied.

Malik Maḥmūd entered Khurasān at a time when men apprehensive of Nādir's growing power could exploit his presence. The two men could be played off against each other, but this was a game Malik Maḥmūd could play too, using Nādir's rivals on the basis of letting dog eat dog. Kāẓim says that on Ḥasan ʿAlī Khān's departure for Māzandarān, "chiefs and warlords who had been ants became snakes and those who were foxes turned into lions. Some of them joined Nādir in quest of means: most who entered Nādir's service and were submissive did so for gain."[21] But many other chiefs, who had sufficient following to entertain a sense of their own position and no reason to feel gratitude for any generosity from Nādir, adopted what Kāẓim describes as an equivocal and hostile attitude. Nādir still had too little strength to take a strong line with these potential enemies. Like a man who knows the needs of the moment, he acted the friend until commanders like ʿĀshūr Khān Bābālū went to Malik Maḥmūd to ask for a governor. This was a move Nādir could not tolerate.

[21] Muḥammad Kāẓim, vol. 1, fol. 29a.

The Sīstānī received the chiefs courteously. Later, an opportunity was granted ʿĀshūr Khān Bābālū and his companions, Imām Qulī Beg and Qilich Khān Beg, to lodge the complaint that Nādir had made himself head of the Abīvard district and was a rebel acting in contempt of high-born officers. Implying that, left to his own devices, Nādir could become a threat to Malik Maḥmūd, they advised the despatch of a trusted courtier to the Abīvard government to procure, by whatever means, the miscreant and bring him to Malik Maḥmūd.

The Begs had met more than their match in Malik Maḥmūd. He complied with their suggestion, but not in the spirit they wished. He chose as the "trusted courtier" no less a person than one of the people of the former Safavid official, Muḥammad Zamān Khān. Muḥammad Amīn Beg was of the *aqvām* ("people") of Muḥammad Zamān Khān, the *Qūrchī Bāshī*, who had been killed in Herat. Muḥammad Zamān Khān was a Shāmlū; Muḥammad Amīn Beg doubtless shared his former master's Türkmen background. When he entered Malik Maḥmūd's service, he in his turn became Qūrchī Bāshī. When Malik Maḥmūd invested him with the governorship of Abīvard, he at the same time issued a brevet for Nādir's appointment as Īshīk Bāshī and also gave him the functions of *Dīvān Begī*. Thus Nādir was to be made a party to Malik Maḥmūd's assumption of power over Khurāsān. He had already been styled Īshīk Bāshī, but the juridical office of Dīvān Begī signalled a new departure. It would be far-fetched to see in Nādir's *dīvānbegīgarī*, to use Kāẓim's word, at Abīvard an exact reflection of this office's importance under the Safavids in Iṣfahān, but the inference can be drawn that Nādir now held an office which made him an arbitrator in disputes and the official hearer of people's appeals for justice. Kāẓim cannot resist pointing out that Malik Maḥmūd's action demonstrated his cleverness and foresight. He was certainly clever enough to see the value of making a bid for the support of a man already strong; and it may be that Nādir's receipt of these appointments from the Malik gave Mīrzā Mahdi Khān the impression that for a time Nādir was actually in Malik Maḥmūd's service at Mashhad, a fact not attested by Muḥammad Kāẓim. The Malik flattered Nādir's detractors by saying that his favours to Nādir were a ruse to lure him to Mashhad, where he would be eliminated. Perhaps he did not tell them that the letters of appointment were accompanied by promises of further favours, should Nādir display sincerity in carrying out his new duties.

The chiefs returned to Abīvard to witness an amicable sharing of duties between Muḥammad Amīn Beg and Nādir, which aroused Imām Qulī Beg's and Qilich Beg's intense envy. Muḥammad Amīn had to warn Nādir of the evil these

men were speaking of him. Nādir, apparently profoundly hurt, adopted the tactic of retiring from the scene. He went to the Darra Gaz and took up residence for a few days in his own fortress there. Faithful chiefs resorted to him and promised that, if he gave leave, they would exact revenge on his calumniators. Nādir restrained them. The opposition could be left to become intoxicated by its apparent success and lulled into extravagant boldness. Muḥammad Amīn then sent Nādir a robe of honour and directions to return which, "as the exigencies of the time seemed to dictate", he did. The old pattern was resumed. Nādir had great powers deputed to him, and masters of their own troops like Imām Qulī Beg and Qilich Khān found subordination to him more intolerable than ever. They returned to Malik Maḥmūd with complaints of Nādir's high-handedness. He promised to summon Nādir and exact retribution. ᶜĀshūr Khān abandoned the contest and shut himself in his qalᶜa. News of this must have interested Malik Maḥmūd, if his intention was to bend the power of the Abīvard leaders on the anvil of their hostility to Nādir.

Nādir seems to have understood the situation very well. He treated ᶜĀshūr Khān with courtesy and concluded a pact of unanimity with him, once the Khan had surrendered. The surrender had not been purchased cheaply. Many lives had been lost and Nādir had refused peace overtures until he had accomplished the total destruction of ᶜĀshūr Khān's qalᶜa by surrounding it with water. This done, Nādir was ready to receive ᶜĀshūr Khān and exchange presents with him in Abīvard.

Nādir dealt differently with the custodian of another of the district's strongholds. Allāhvardī Beg Bābālū ingratiated himself with the local chiefs and *rīsh-safīdān* ("white beards") and then peremptorily rejected Nādir's overtures. There was a battle, but at nightfall Allāhvardī Beg gallantly sent Nādir's camp trays of food and was given safe-conduct to visit it. A tent having been provided for him, after he retired Nādir set about interrogating the chiefs who had come with Allāhvardī Beg. They told Nādir that his guest had often said he would settle Nādir's account if ever the chance presented itself. Nādir decided to strike first. He had Allāhvardī dragged from his bed and decapitated. He had questioned the chiefs about the state of Allāhvardī's stronghold, which he now captured, gaining also "an abundance" of cattle.[22]

Nādir's purpose seems to have been to reduce potential rivals either by force followed by conciliation and the gaining of their assistance, or by force followed by a readiness to be friendly which could swiftly turn to murderous hostility,

[22] *ibid.*, vol. 1, fol. 31a (p. 73).

made the more effective by surprise. Extra manpower would become available by the employment of either tactic. Submissive chiefs brought their people with them. Murdered chiefs left leaderless men for Nādir to take over. If Malik Maḥmūd's policy was as has been suggested, it fortuitously helped Nādir: the Malik's miscalculation was that he did not give sufficient credence to Nādir's strength and determination. He no doubt thought that the time would come when only Nādir would be left, master of the field but his for the plucking. Nādir was going to make himself master but he was not going to be plucked. Muḥammad Kāẓim gives clear evidence for Nādir's alternating policies of friendliness and ruthlessness. He is equally clear on the consequences of success in the kind of society Nādir was working to dominate: chiefs from all sides were soon attracted into the *successful* leader's service. They converged on the fortress of Abīvard, to place themselves at Nādir's disposal. Nādir's power grew greater day by day.

When Nādir heard that Malik Maḥmūd contemplated assuming the status of a crowned king and was about to send a force against Abīvard, he made a raid on the suburbs of Mashhad to contain Maḥmūd's forces in their base. Nādir's small but highly mobile force of twelve hundred young troopers met stiff resistance from Maḥmūd in a two-day encounter, but Nādir's mobility and his men's courage in hand-to-hand fighting prevented Maḥmūd's well-ordered force from destroying him. He escaped with enough booty to invite repetition of such a raid on Mashhad's outlying districts.

In 1137/1724–5 Maḥmūd declared that through divine intervention the Shrine of the Eighth Imām of the Twelver Shīʿa had become a seat of power whence Afghans and rebels everywhere could expect punishment. The coinage would be minted and *khuṭba*, the Friday Bidding Prayer, recited in his name as king. In what appears to have been a hatchet-burying exercise, the chiefs were invited to make submission for the new king's favours, an invitation some of them, notably Shāh Vardī Khān and Muḥammad Riżā Khān of the Chamishgazak Kurds, accepted. All the khans from Sabzavār, Nīshāpūr, Khwāf and Jām entered the presence of the "Pādshāh-i Kayānī". Nādir was one of those who ignored the rumour of the Malik's justice which was being spread far and wide: he "buckled on the belt of rebellion . . . and was bent on equipping an army to fend for himself".[23]

He urged two of the Jalāyirid Begs to join him and they approached the *Vakīl* of their tribe, who had for some time privately cherished an admiration for

[23] *ibid.*, vol. 1, fol. 32a (p. 76).

Nādir. One of the most enduring alliances of Nādir's life began. Ṭahmāsp Vakīl-i Jalāyir left the area of Āb-i Garm to become Nādir's *Vakīl al-Daula*. Kāẓim may be right to ascribe this alliance directly to Malik Maḥmūd's open assumption of royal powers over Khurāsān. The contest was now one of Nādir and the Jalāyirid Ṭahmāsp against Malik Maḥmūd, who had formidable forces on his side.

It seems that while he had been busy in Abīvard and contending against his rivals, as well as watching the movements of Malik Maḥmūd, Nādir had lost his hold on the hotly contested Kalāt. Once he was reinforced by Ṭahmāsp and the Jalāyirid contingents, Kalāt was taken from the "helpless" Ghaffār Beg ʿArab (*ʿarab-i bīchāra*) and its custody given to Ṭahmāsp. Kāẓim considers that Nādir was by this time strong enough to think of conquests beyond his own locality. He was alluding to a move against Sarakhs. Sarakhs was showing signs of what might happen to a peripheral border town when central government collapsed and trade was disrupted: its governor could only signify allegiance to Nādir by offering the poorest of gifts. Kāẓim presents further evidence of the unsettled times in his summary of various molestations of the Safavid state which followed the example set by the Ghilzais and Abdālīs of Qandahar and Herat. He mentions first, as befitted a man who was from Marv, Tatars whose grounds were spread between Marv and the Syr-Daryā and who began preying on the Khurāsān and Māzandarān borders. Secondly, the Lezgīs of Dāghistān who, under Ḥājjī Dāʾūd Jārū Talah, with Surkhāʾī Lezgī and Ottoman support, seized Shīrvān. Thirdly, the Ottoman Turks, who could not resist the opportunity to move against a defeated and disintegrating Iran; a move that reasons of State dictated as much as the cupidity excited by the genuine economic and fiscal strains to which the Ottoman Empire was subject.

On his escape from Iṣfahān, which Muḥammad Muḥsin dates to 12 June 1722, Shāh Ṭahmāsp reached Qazvīn, which fell to the Afghans in December 1722; Ṭahmāsp moved into Āẕarbāījān. When the Porte heard of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain's deposition in October 1722, Ibrāhīm, the Ottoman governor at Erzerum, was directed to campaign in Georgia. His colleague at Baghdad, Aḥmad Pāshā, was ordered to do likewise towards Kirmānshāh and Hamadān. Appeals to Ṭahmāsp from Tiflis, Āhar, Erivan, Nakhchivān, Tabrīz and Marāgha were useless: the fugitive Safavid had no army. These cities, like Kirmānshāh and Hamadān, had no alternative but to surrender.

With Āẕarbāījān closed to him, Ṭahmāsp moved towards Māzandarān, to the Qājār government at Astarābād. Russia was yet another invading power. Kāẓim's treatment of the Russian episode is briefly as follows. When Ṭahmāsp assumed the reins of government in Qazvīn, he sent an envoy to Russia. The

envoy, Ismaʿīl Beg, explained that the Russians could consider the rescue of the region from Gīlān to Māzandarān as assigned to their good offices. If this *was* the burden of Ismaʿīl's message, it was to save face: the Tsar had anticipated the Safavid embassy's invitation and already sent some ten to twelve thousand men to secure Gīlān. But Ismaʿīl's face-saving device seems to have gained him the welcome which Kāẓim alleges his surrender of Gīlān and Māzandarān was intended to win for him. In Saint Petersburg in August 1723 he was accorded a great reception. A treaty was concluded the next month, but when Ismaʿīl returned to Ṭahmāsp he had to flee to escape punishment. He died in exile at Astrakhan some twenty years later.

When Nādir turned his attention to the impoverished Sarakhs and the Atak border region, ʿĀshūr Khān forgot his agreement and joined forces with Jaʿfar Khān Shādlū of the Chamishgazak Kurds. He again took up a position of defiance in a fortress, but an event now occurred which diverted Nādir from this crisis and which gives a hint of his relationships with traders. Since news of Nādir's strength had spread, Uzbek raids into Khurāsān had abated and merchants had again been able to reach Mashhad and other parts of the province for trading purposes. Now Nādir received an embassy from Shīr Ghāzī Khān of Khiva. A party of Khwārazmī merchants, whom Shīr Ghāzī Khān had sent to Mashhad with an appreciable quantity of cloth and horses, had been attacked on their journey home. Following directions given by Malik Maḥmūd, they were to be escorted across the River Tejen by the governor of the village of Chahcha, which was then subject to the Malik. When the villagers demanded a toll an altercation broke out in which the caravan was pillaged. Nādir was able to restore to Shīr Ghāzī Khān's merchants all their losses, which were gold and jewels: it seems that the Khwārazm trade was in cloth and horses, in return for precious metals and stones.

This diversion did not afford ʿĀshūr Khān and his Kurdish allies much respite. Nādir employed the five hundred men Shīr Ghāzī Khān had sent with his delegation and reduced the fortress of Qūzghān (or Gūzgān) where ʿĀshūr Khān was besieged. Nādir had at this time many calls upon his limited resources. It was a phase of fortress-reduction in several quarters. Opponents were coming out in a number of directions and each took refuge in forts rather than meet Nādir in the open. This strategy also kept his forces locked up in protracted and, to him, never welcome siege-operations. Jaʿfar Khān Shādlū the Chamishgazak Kurd had surrendered, deserting ʿĀshūr Khān, but Nādir had next to cope with a group of ʿAlī Īlī Türkmens who based themselves on a place called Khūrmand in the neighbourhood of Nīshāpūr. He left his brother Ibrāhīm in charge of operations against ʿĀshūr Khān and made a surprise attack on the Türkmens,

many of whom he slew and many of whom, with their cattle, he captured. Ibrāhīm reached an understanding with ʿĀshūr Khān and entreated Nādir, with success, to take him again into his confidence. Nādir probably needed men; Shīr Ghāzī Khān's five hundred, Mīrzā Mahdī Khān tells us, were, however, dismissed once Qūzghān was reduced.[24]

During these engagements Ḥasan ʿAlī Beg the *Muʿaiyir Bāshī* (Chief Assayer) or *Muʿaiyir al-Mamālik* (Assayer of the Realms) arrived with a party from Ṭahmāsp Mīrzā, Shāh Ṭahmāsp II, ostensibly to announce to Nādir the Shah's intention of entering Khurāsān, and to ask him to be ready with an army. Nādir promised service at whichever point the Shah entered the province, but it is to be suspected that the visit from Ḥasan ʿAlī Beg was primarily to gather intelligence about Nādir's position and power. Ṭahmāsp, in Māzandarān, was beginning to assemble an army under the guidance of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Qājār, and had heard rumours of Nādir's new ascendancy.

Besides the ʿAlī Īlī Türkmens, who in conjunction with the Yimrī Türkmens sought Nādir's help against the depredations of the Göklen and Yamūt Türkmens, a party of the Kurdish settlers at Abīvard was representing to him that he should make common cause with their leaders against Malik Maḥmūd. Meanwhile, he received further deputations, this time from a Darvīsh ʿAlī Sulṭān Hazāra and Dilāvar Khān Tāymanī Bughāir, complaining about the same Göklen and Yamūt raiders whom others desired his strength to repel. He postponed action on these requests until he had attended to problems in the northeast.

It was more urgent in his judgement to return to the Atak and Marv areas. Settlement there would mean more security for his bases at Abīvard and Kalāt. Furthermore, if he asserted himself in the northeastern region of Khurāsān and along the Atak frontier, he would have control of Mashhad's routes into Transcaspia; the Marv–Ṭūs road would be his. The misfortune of the Khwārazmian merchants, which Nādir had alleviated, provides a clue to the fact that Malik Maḥmūd was trying to revive trade along these routes, control of which, as Nādir may well have perceived, would be damaging to Malik Maḥmūd and would willy-nilly make Nādir acceptable among mercantile people. So he first responded to the requests for aid against the Tatars which he received from men such as Shāh Qulī Beg, son of Muḥammad ʿAlī Beg, the Īshīk Āqāsī Bāshī of Marv, and which were also pressed by Aḥmad Sulṭān and the other Qizilbāsh notables of Marv who were already permanently in Nādir's entourage.

Marv had suffered from the excesses of Muḥammad ʿAlī Beg who, when

[24] Mīrzā Mahdī Khān, p. 53.

appointed Īshīk Āqāsī Bāshī, had surrounded himself with ruffians and devoted himself to debauchery. Muḥammad ʿAlī's hangers-on had refused to co-operate with Muḥammad Amīn Khān, who had been sent to replace him. Muḥammad Amīn Khān had been forced to flee to Mashhad; his detractors in Marv reported to Iṣfahān that his overbearing conduct had made him unacceptable and that any replacement would receive the same treatment. These events can, therefore, be dated to before Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain's fall, but their nature makes it clear that they happened late in the decline of that Shah's power. The next attempt to supersede Muḥammad ʿAlī was, in fact, made by Malik Maḥmūd. His nominee to Marv suffered the same fate as Muḥammad Amīn.

When Muḥammad ʿAlī died, he left three sons, one of whom, Pūlād Beg, succeeded, but in the anarchy which followed, the Tatars, while outwardly professing Safavid–Qizilbāsh loyalties, tricked Pūlād Beg into joining them in a fraternal meal and fell on him and his retinue. Pūlād managed to escape but his men were slain and the Tatars cut off Marv's water supply. To these hardships for the people of Marv was added, in 1136/1723–4, a plague which left Marv a ruin. Its restoration became one of Nādir's long-pursued and favourite schemes. Pūlād Beg and Shāh Qulī went into Khurāsān to seek help from the Kurds; but in 1137/1724–5 it was Nādir they approached.

Nādir probably knew the Persian adage, "Threatened with death a patient is content with a fever." So long as different groups in Khurāsān were in quest of help they would not be a danger to him and he could look on while they fell into further difficulties. It is a measure of his strength, and of his determination to conserve it, that he could exercise restraint and select his own time to grant requests for aid which were now repeatedly coming to him. He lent some men to Pūlād Beg and Shāh Qulī, but advised them to go to the Kurdish chief, Shāh Vardī Khān. Nādir's answer disappointed them. So did Shāh Vardī Khān's, which Nādir might have foreseen: Shāh Vardī Khān recommended recourse to Malik Maḥmūd.

Malik Maḥmūd did more than prevaricate. He received the Tatar leader, ʿAskar Beg, with a cordiality that made the Marvī suppliants aware that no help could be expected from him. Finally, the wretched populace of Marv was driven away by hunger to a place called Türkmān Qalʿa. It was now that Nādir moved. He defeated the Marv Tatars with reinforcements from the Bayāt, Muḥammad Beg. In a second successful encounter, he distributed the Tatars' goods among his men and led the defeated Tatars' women and children into captivity. With his customary concern for collecting people, he transported these Tatars to a fortress in the Abīvard district. Leaving Pūlād Beg governor of Marv, he also removed some one thousand of the Marv Qizilbāsh to Abīvard. The whole

region of the Atak down as far as Khabūshān was now obedient to this new lord of the frontier.

The Kurdish element in this tribal frontier-mosaic remained refractory. Shāh Vardī Khān, leader of the Kaivānlū, appealed for help against the "Darra Gaz" Afshārs, who were footloose hooligans (*bī sar o pā*), to the Chamishgazak Kurdish leaders, and proposed an assembly of Kurdish interests at their centre, Khabūshān. Shāh Vardī Khān and his allies wrote to Nādir and asked him what he wanted, to which he answered that he wished to form a marriage-tie with the sister of Muḥammad Ḥusain Zaᶜfarānlū, chief of the Chamishgazak. He added that he hoped his and their powers could become one.

The Kurdish leaders did not see matters in the same way, but were eventually put to flight in an engagement in which Nādir had to fight hard to keep the battle in his favour. He laid siege to Khabūshān and the Kurds sued for terms. If he would return to Abīvard, they would agree to the union he had proposed. Nādir complied. It was at about this time Nādir's brother Ibrāhīm married Tauḥīd Khān Afshār's daughter, by whom his son ᶜAlī Qulī was born.

Nādir now decided to march into Juvain and Isfarāʾīn – a move towards the River Atrak and beyond Khabūshān into more westerly districts. Some of the Bughāira and Girā-īlī Türkmen tribes were displaced when Kurds had been settled at Bujnūrd over a century before and it was among these people that Nādir now went. It seems that they readily joined him. They became important adjuncts to his power. He was gaining more allies but, perhaps because of this, the craving for increased treasure that was to dog him to the end of his days had already begun. In an opportunist and unsentimental society, the more a leader had dependants, the greater was his need for credit so that his subordinates' belief in his limitless capacity to reward their services could be maintained. Beyond his immediate kin, Nādir, in amassing a large army, moved into the exigent realm of mercenaries' demands. Kāẓim, in treating this stage of Nādir's career, makes a remark that portends what the world from Tiflis to Delhi was later to experience. After gaining the adherence of the Bughāira and Girā-īlī tribes, Nādir swiftly returned to Sarakhs. From there, he sent out a raiding party to Khwāf and Bākharz, west of the Harī Rūd towards the city of Herat. The raiders returned with booty and prisoners. One of these reported to Nādir the Afghans' oppressive treatment of them, in particular, their constant violations of the women of Khwāf; but, he added, "They don't pillage our goods like your army does."[25]

[25] Muḥammad Kāẓim, vol. 1, fol. 43b (p. 98); these events are also reported by Mīrzā Mahdī Khān, pp. 79–80.

ṬAHMĀSP QULĪ KHĀN

The last months of 1726 were crucial in Nādir's career. He met Shāh Ṭahmāsp, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Qājār was put to death, and, with Malik Maḥmūd defeated, Mashhad was restored to Safavid control through Nādir's agency. The Shah had made him a *khān* before they met at Khabūshān. When he presented himself to Ṭahmāsp, he was dubbed Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān. He is referred to at the time of his reception by the Shāh as Naẕr Qulī Beg.

Muḥammad Muḥsin wrote his *Zubdat al-tavārīkh* (Essence of Histories) in 1154/1741–2 for Nādir's eldest son, Riżā Qulī, before this prince was blinded. The date of writing absolves the author from suspicion of being influenced, as Muḥammad Kāẓim may have been, by the desire not to offend the Qājārs. Kāẓim's only known manuscript is dated 1210/1795–6, within the period of Qājār domination. Mīrzā Mahdī Khān apparently wrote most of his history of Nādir Shāh during the Shah's lifetime, but he may later have not wanted to displease the Qājārs. Reliance alone on these two sources' version of the death of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Qājār would leave Nādir's part in the episode only doubtfully authenticated. Moreover, the two differ. Mīrzā Mahdī makes Nādir appear to advocate clemency. He reports that Nādir advised Shāh Ṭahmāsp to incarcerate Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān rather than do away with him. Temporary confinement in the Kalāt would have left Nādir peerless in the field, to claim sole credit for the restoration of Mashhad to Safavid control. Meanwhile, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, a hostage among Nādir's friends, impressed by Nādir's strength in that remote part of Khurāsān, might understand that his best course would be co-operation with the other most effective man in Shāh Ṭahmāsp's entourage. Thus Mīrzā Mahdī Khān's version of the event does not lack plausibility.

Muḥammad Muḥsin's account tallies more with Kāẓim's less favourable description of Nādir's behaviour. In both he appears, if not as the man who committed the murder, as the one who supervised it. There is also a difference over the question of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān's reluctance to make the final assault on Mashhad and Malik Maḥmūd, in an expedition the annalists agree he had originally instigated.

The reasons they give vary, but Muḥsin and Mīrzā Mahdī Khān concur that Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān wanted to return to Astarābād and postpone the attack on Mashhad. Kāẓim does not mention Fatḥ ʿAlī's qualms, and Muḥsin is the only one among the three who reports that he went so far as secretly to write to Malik Maḥmūd. Mīrzā Mahdī says that the Qājār felt his forces were deficient and the winter weather inimical to continuing the campaign. Ṭahmāsp II's trouble in

Āẕarbāījān was lack of an army and generals. At Astarābād, however, he found a warm welcome from the Qājārs and had reason to hope they would provide the military force he so badly needed. Kāẓim says they assembled thirty thousand men for Khurāsān's "conquest". Muḥsin also indicates that the Qājār contingent was numerous.

Elimination of Malik Maḥmūd seems to have been an obvious priority and according to Kāẓim, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān urged it, but after Nādir "had entered the Shah's heart", Ṭahmāsp complained of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān on the grounds that he had pressed for the Khurāsān expedition when Ṭahmāsp desired above all to regain Iṣfahān. Ṭahmāsp alleged that the Qājār had used strong language, and Nādir promised to bring him Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān's head whenever he should command. He had then visited Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, who thought the call an ordinary one of courtesy, but Nādir had him murdered by some Kurds. No Qājār rival, as in Mīrzā Mahdī's version, was involved. The Shah was satisfied and made Nādir his Qūrchī Bāshī. Courtiers whispered that at Nādir's hands the Shah would one day find himself in like case to Fatḥ ʿAlī's.[26]

When the Shah and Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān reached Khabūshān they were in the Chamishgazak Kurds' country. According to Muḥsin, the reason for Fatḥ ʿAlī's anxiety was distrust of the Kurds' professions of fidelity. Then Nādir arrived, promptly to be shown the Shah's highest regard. To Fatḥ ʿAlī's other worries was added disquiet over the man who seemed destined to supplant him. In Khurāsān he was not on his home-ground whereas Nādir certainly was. Muḥsin says he decided to return to Astarābād, "to repair his plans". Muḥsin also comments on tribes flocking to Nādir's banner daily and remarks that not only had Nādir never wavered in his refusal to commit himself to Malik Maḥmūd, but in frequent engagements had managed to capture much of the cannon and ordnance in which the Malik's strategic superiority had lain. Shāh Ṭahmāsp could hardly fail to appreciate that, now no longer in Qājār Māzandarān but in Nādir's Khurāsān, he had found the man he needed for the next phase of the mission to retrieve Iran. If Fatḥ ʿAlī looked like becoming a stumbling-block, he must go. Kāẓim's assertion that it was courtiers who urged his removal may suggest that the courtiers were simply articulating what they took to be the Shah's thoughts.

Muḥsin says that Fatḥ ʿAlī's pique at Nādir's assumption of the direction of operations went so far that he contemplated treason and communicated with the enemy. Malik Maḥmūd had marched out to meet the Shah but, possibly when he

[26] Muḥammad Kāẓim, vol. I, fol. 46a–46b.

heard of Nādir's arrival, had withdrawn behind the defences of Mashhad. Fatḥ ʿAlī's treasonable correspondence was exposed and the Shah called him to his *khalvat-khāna* for a private talk. "With the good offices and help of Naẕr Beg" Fatḥ ʿAlī was fetched, saw the Shah and then Nādir pulled him outside and "brought him to his just deserts and brought his head into the Sacred Presence".[27]

The way was clear to invest Mashhad. The move Kāẓim claims the Qājārs had desired to have postponed till the sun entered Pisces – after 20 February and therefore in early spring 1727 – followed their leader's death in October 1726 and was completed with the fall of Mashhad in December. It would not have been so easy but for the defection of Malik Maḥmūd's Commander-in-Chief, Pīr Muḥammad. He arranged with Nādir to open a gate for the army's entrance. He seems to have read the times correctly: Khurāsān, with the sanction of the Shah's favour, was Nādir's. Malik Maḥmūd's brief day was over. He took refuge in the Shrine but later, with his brothers Isḥāq and Muḥammad ʿAlī, was put to death on Nādir's orders, because he began to intrigue when Nādir was engaged with the Chamishgazak Kurds.

The Kurdish leaders defected as soon as Mashhad had fallen. They tried to gain the royal person for themselves and the vacillating Shah, urged perhaps by courtiers jealous of Nādir, seems to have accepted the Kurdish leaders' claim that they were ready to march to Iṣfahān and settle accounts with the Afghans. He left Mashhad and secretly made for Khabūshān, accompanied by his Master of Ordnance and the Iʿtimād al-Daula, Mīrzā Muʾmin Qazvīnī. Nādir soon followed and defeated the Kurds after charging them with kidnapping the Shah. He left the Shah to find his own way back while he hurriedly returned to Mashhad where, Muḥsin says, he sealed the royal workshops and offices, and set about ordering affairs. The chiefs listed by Kāẓim as recipients of shares in the Kurdish spoils show that Nādir's principal officers were mostly Afshārs, including Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān son of Bābā ʿAlī Abīvardī. Marvīs and Bughāirī Turks were also prominent and at the head of the list stood Ṭahmāsp Khān Jalāyir. On arrival in Khurāsān and especially in the redistribution of offices following Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Qājār's murder, Shāh Ṭahmāsp had spread his patronage among a variety of tribal representatives. They included Shāhvardī Beg the Kurd as *Tūfangchī Āqāsī*, and Bairām ʿAlī, a khān of the Bayāt, as *Nāẓir*. His vazirate went to Mīrzā Qavām-i Qazvīnī. Besides Nādir, in the post of Qūrchī Bāshī, Nādir's brother-in-law, Kalb ʿAlī Khān, held the office of *Īshīk Āqāsī*. But as

[27] Muḥsin, fol. 223a. But cf. Chapters 2 and 3 for other accounts of this episode.

Muḥsin says, "the reins of choice" were in Nādir's hands, although his post, equivalent to war minister, was not that of chief minister.

Ṭahmāsp was in Mashhad for the New Year and the festivities surrounding Nādir's marriage to a sister of one of the Kurdish leaders. There were fourteen days of rejoicing, but the marriage did not end Kurdish disaffection. The next objective was to be Herat, but the projected union of Nādir's Mashhad army with one organized by the Shah's general, Muḥammad ʿAlī ibn Aṣlān Khān, never occurred in central Iran: Nādir was to attempt Herat on his own. The fact that writers like Muḥsin exaggerate when they ascribe all power to Nādir at this stage becomes evident when we learn of the Shah's declaration that whichever of his two generals succeeded first would be made Vakīl al-Daula, the other being left as his subordinate. What Muḥsin and Nādir's other historians might with truth have claimed is that at this time Nādir was sufficiently in control to have exercised more power than he did, had he wished to, but that he was too prudent to be over-hasty. He could always wait.

On this occasion he did not have to wait long for the results of the Shah's contrived rivalry between him and Muḥammad ʿAlī ibn Aṣlān Khān to appear. Muḥammad ʿAlī intrigued with the Kurds against Nādir, who once more had to hasten to their defeat, this time at Sabzavār. Ṭahmāsp was in the plot and again had to crave Nādir's pardon, as he had done after his earlier withdrawal into the Kurdish camp. He again received it: he was too valuable a symbol to be lost to rivals.

Nādir had trouble from Muḥammad ʿAlī a second time. Muḥammad ʿAlī's brother, Ẕuʾl-Fiqār, had established himself in Māzandarān and the two took advantage of Nādir's absence on his first Herat expedition to consolidate their forces. Nādir returned and Muḥammad ʿAlī made his peace. Ẕuʾl-Fiqār was executed and Nādir resumed action on the Herat front, where he succeeded in the early summer of 1729. He exacted small punishment from that key city and left one of his former Abdālī enemies, Allāhyār Khān, as Herat's officially installed governor. The Herat operations had entailed a lengthy siege and it was essential to finish the business without further delay; the attack on the Ghilzai Ashraf at Iṣfahān could not be put off any longer.

Ashraf, who had succeeded his cousin, Maḥmūd, as Afghan ruler in Iṣfahān after Maḥmūd's murder in 1725, had tried to relieve the pressure on Herat by marching from Iṣfahān towards Khurāsān in July–August 1729. He was too late: it was just after Herat had fallen. Nādir defeated him in the battle of Mihmāndūst on 29 September.[28] By November Ashraf had sustained a second

[28] For a re-analysis of this battle, see Adle, "La bataille de Mehmāndust" (1973).

defeat in the battle of Mūrchakhūr. On 13 November he fled from Iṣfahān, which Nādir entered three days later. The Shah, who had been left at Tehran, joined him on 29 November and permitted the fulfilment of a promise when he allowed the marriage of Nādir to his sister, Rażiyya Begum, while another sister, Fāṭima Begum, was bethrothed to Nādir's son, Riżā Qulī. The Chevalier de Gardane describes Nādir as being about forty years of age at this time; if 1698 is taken as the year of his birth, he was thirty-one.

The year 1730 was at first chiefly taken up with the pursuit of the fleeing Afghans and reconquest of Fārs, followed by that of western Iran and Āẕarbāījān. Diplomatic action included sending Riżā Qulī Khān Shāmlū to the Porte, to announce the Shah's restoration to his capital and require the Ottomans' withdrawal from Iranian soil; and ʿAlī Mardān Khān Shāmlū to Delhi, to ask the Mughul, Muḥammad Shāh, to close his frontiers to Afghan fugitives from Iran, a matter Nādir was able to use later as a *casus belli*. Muḥammad ʿAlī Khān was appointed Governor of Fārs, and Nādir departed for Dizfūl and the western marches on 8 March for a spring campaign. He met Muḥammad Khān Balūch returning from his embassy to the Turks of 1727 on behalf of Ashraf Ghilzai. Nādir, although he was later to have cause to regret it, established Muḥammad Khān Balūch as governor over the Kūhgīlūya district between Fārs and Khūzistān. In June he retook Hamadān and entered Tabrīz on 12 August. Distant Afsharid kin in Āẕarbāījān had not responded to Nādir's blandishments with the enthusiasm he might have expected, but the merchants and notables of Tabrīz welcomed him with open arms and pleaded with him to be their guest for the winter.

He could not accept this invitation because on 16 August news came from Mashhad which compelled speedy action. His brother Ibrāhīm had been left in charge of Mashhad. When the Abdālīs of Herat launched an attack, Ibrāhīm was not equal to the occasion. Allāhyār Khān had been dismissed from his governorship by Ẕu'l-Fiqār the Abdālī. This man proved susceptible to promptings from Ḥusain Sulṭān Ghilzai of Qandahar that he should attack Khurāsān. Mashhad was surprised and ill-prepared. By what seemed a miracle it was saved when Ẕuʾl-Fiqār withdrew as suddenly as he had arrived. Hearing that this had happened, Nādir sent warning to his brother that he had better hide himself in Abīvard lest Nādir should kill him when he saw him. Nādir slowed his march and did not reach Mashhad until November. Tabrīzī notables had accompanied him part of the way and coupled their pleas that he should winter in their city with offers of a large sum of money and guaranteed tax receipts. Nādir was uncertain whether to continue eastwards, but news from Herat was decisive.

Ẕuʾl-Fiqār had been reinforced by an army from Qandahar under the exceptionally brave Saidāl Khān.

While Nādir was preoccupied in Khurāsān and at Herat, Shāh Ṭahmāsp rashly chose to try conclusions with the Turks. His army gave every evidence of extremely bad leadership in Nādir's absence. The Shah was eventually bottled up at Erivan and severely defeated in the battle of Kurījān. The Turks regained Tabrīz and Hamadān, and in January 1732 Shah Ṭahmāsp concluded a treaty with them on terms considered humiliating enough for Nādir to be able to use this treaty for his own purposes: in well-publicized despatches, he rebuked the Shah for affronting Shīʿī sentiment by such abject submission to a Sunnī Power.

Nādir's second Herat campaign lasted from March 1731 nearly to the end of the following February. He sent Allāhyār Khān, whose failure to conciliate rivals had precipitated his fall, to exile in Multan. Sixty thousand other Abdālīs were transplanted to Mashhad, Nīshāpūr and Dāmghān. Nādir was already building up an Afghan counterpoise to other elements in the array of heterogeneous forces he was assembling into a war machine.

He did not hurry to correct the ills resulting from Shāh Ṭahmāsp's ill-judged venture into war. He waited in Mashhad while petitions reached him from Iṣfahān about the Shah's sottish conduct and the depredations of an army which there was nobody to keep in order. It was not until August 1732 that he arrived, to be met at Kāshān by the Shah's chief critics, Mīr Abu ʾl-Qāsim Kāshī, Ḥasan ʿAlī the *Muʿaiyir Bāshī* and the *Nadīm al-Majlis*, Zakī Khān. It had been they who sent Nādir copies of the severe terms of the Ottoman Treaty, and who had been begging him to come to the rescue. At Kāshān, Kāẓim says, they warned Nādir that the Shah's evil counsellors had suggested the invasion of Khurāsān and capture of Nādir, who should be made to pay for the life of Fatḥ ʿAlī Qājār with his own. Nādir made these alleged plans against him the pretext for entering the suburbs of Iṣfahān surrounded by an imposing guard and parade of force; Muḥammad Khalīl Marʿashī Ṣafavī, an irrefutably hostile witness, attributes Nādir's delay in reaching the capital to his having augmented his army so that when he arrived he would have a force none dare oppose.[29]

It certainly seems to have frightened the Shah. He fled to an outlying village and may have thought of fleeing further afield, but Nādir protested loyalty in the gentlest terms and Ṭahmāsp was persuaded to meet him. The kind words did not cease and the Shah soon returned Nādir's visit to him. Nādir received him in a camp he had specially prepared in the Hazār Jarīb garden. Knowing Ṭahmāsp's

[29] Marʿashī, pp. 80ff.

tastes, he had brought favourite musicians from Khurāsān for the Shah's entertainment. While the Shah amused himself, Nādir went outside and staged an outburst of anger against those courtiers whom he charged with having pandered to the Shah's vices. This ruse worked. The courtiers immediately transferred the blame for the Shah's conduct to the Shah himself. They said that they had tried unavailingly to restrain him. Nādir took his cue: obviously it was imperative to replace a Shah so palpably unfit to rule. Nādir thus made the leading men of the Court denounce the Shah out of their own mouths, and it was a party of them who went in to Ṭahmāsp and told him he must abdicate. They came back with the royal insignia and Nādir again addressed the assembled company. He informed them that "the ᶜ*Umarā* of [Persian] ᶜIrāq"[30] had deposed Shāh Ṭahmāsp and that he proposed that the Shah's infant son should be raised to the throne as ᶜAbbās III. The Amīrs and courtiers agreed and the Shah was sent to Khurāsān.

This is Kāẓim's account. Except in minor details, it does not conflict with Muḥsin's, but it is interesting because of its description of the artful way in which the deposition was carried out; there seems no reason to doubt Nādir's capacity for such a skilful, carefully stage-managed manoeuvre. On that day in September 1732 he was not ready to shake the authority of the Crown any more than he could help, nor ready himself to shoulder the blame for the deposition. He spread the responsibility for it among all the influential men present. At the same time he also emphasized that to depose a legitimate sovereign was not a light matter.

He made Ṭahmāsp Khān Jalāyir Governor of Iṣfahān and dis-embarrassed himself of Muḥammad ᶜAlī Khān ibn Aṣlān Khān's presence by sending him as his second envoy to Delhi. How fragile his hold still was over Iran's regions and peoples was shown by the need, before he could embark on his second campaign against the Turks, to suppress a Bakhtiyārī rebellion. However, foreign conquest would be a diversion from rebellion at home, especially when the armies taken abroad comprised large numbers of men in a medley that included representatives of all the tribes most likely to rebel. But the Baghdad campaign was needed for other reasons. The Shah's failure had to be expunged and, in striking at Baghdad, Nādir was not only attacking the Ottomans' major provincial government adjacent to Iran, but making a bid for control of the trade-axis from India through Baṣra and Baghdad to the Levant. As for the heterogeneity of his army, accounts of the siege of Baghdad ring with the brave deeds of

[30] Muḥammad Kāẓim, vol. 1, fol. 175b.

Afghans, Hazāras, Bakhtiyārīs and Āẕarbāījānīs. Hunger was what made tribes refractory. They looked for the spoils of foreign conquest. Unfortunately, to accumulate these spoils became an obsession which in the end left Nādir no time for more constructive policies. Another task also became paramount, the requirement to find the money, equipment and provisions for an army which had to be bribed as well as accoutred and fed.

The first stage of the Baghdad campaign began in January 1733. In July Nādir was severely defeated by Topāl Osmān Pāshā, whom he met twenty miles north of the city. Iran then had a taste of the rigours which Nādir could impose on it. He retreated to Hamadān and between 4 August and 2 October succeeded in raising enough cash, estimated at £400,000, to re-equip his forces and resume the war. Topāl was defeated and killed south of Kirkuk and on 19 December Aḥmad Pāshā of Baghdad came to terms. Yet Nādir gained only a small return for this most costly effort. The Porte, probably aware of Nādir's problems at home, did not hurry to ratify the treaty.

Muḥammad Khān Balūch, whom he had left in charge of the fractious Kūhgīlūya, harnessed that area's turbulence in rebellion. Nādir was already severely strained. He had to send Luṭf ʿAlī, Bābā ʿAlī Abīvardī's son, to secure Tabrīz against an Ottoman army under Ganj ʿAlī Pāshā. Muḥammad Khān Balūch was able to raise the whole of Khūzistān in a rebellion which showed that he could gain support from the mercantile centres of that region and along the shore of the Persian Gulf. Such a situation left Nādir no time to tarry over terms with Aḥmad Pāshā. He had to hasten into southwest Iran, where the trading communities must have suffered more than they had gained from Nādir's expensive attempt to seize Baghdad.

The matter was terminated in Fārs with Muḥammad Khān's defeat and death. By August 1734 Nādir was in Ardabīl preparing to fight Surkhāʾī, the Khān of Shīrvān, for possession of Shamākhī. In the spring Nādir had seen the Porte's and Russia's envoys. He had been sceptical of the Ottoman peace proposals and, after crossing the River Kura on 21 August, towards Shamākhī, he demanded Bākū and Darband from the Russians. In November, an unseasonable month for any campaigner but Nādir to fight in such an area, he carried his north-western expedition as far as the gates of Ganja. At the Iranian New Year, March 1735, he concluded the Treaty of Ganja by which he and the Russians established a common frontier.[31] Muḥammad Kāẓim speaks of Nādir's conciliatory relations with the Armenian Patriarchate at Echmiadzin, of his reception of Russian

[31] Cf. below, p. 324.

merchants and of his asking how a woman, the Empress Anne, could be sovereign of a great empire. He is alleged to have suggested that he become her husband so that the two realms might be one.

For Erivan, "the frontier with the dominion of Rum", Nādir chose a *Mīn Bāshī* (master of a thousand) of his own bodyguard as governor. The *Mīn Bāshī* was Muḥammad Rižā Beg Khurāsānī, "of an old family undeviating in the way of good service".[32] Other centres, Ganja, the Qarābāgh and Arrān, were left under local Qājārs. Friendship had been secured with Russia. The enemy was to be the Ottoman Turks. Erivan would be a keypoint.

When he turned from the south to the Caucasian isthmus, Nādir was going to where wealth from trade might be more readily available at that juncture than in the southwest. His Baghdad expedition must have disrupted the southern trade and whenever the flow of trade in the Gulf was impeded, experience shows that merchants were quick to use the Black Sea–Caucasus routes as alternatives. The punishments meted out after Muḥammad Khān Balūch's rebellion to cities like Shūshtar, Ḥuvaiza and Kāzarūn were, to say the least, austere, but descriptions of them include no reference to fines comparable with the 60,000 tūmāns raised by "strict collectors" from the *ashrāf* (highborn), the *aᶜyān* (notables), the *tujjār* (merchants) and the *qavāfil* (caravans) of the Shīrvān district. But, as if in an attempt both to revive the Gulf trade and ensure his share in it, in April 1735 Nādir let his admiral, Laṭīf Khān, attempt the seizure of the port of Baṣra. Its Pāshā, having commandeered British ships, routed this attempt in June. Failure at Baṣra was compensated for by the eventual successes in the Caucasus. In the same June another formidable Ottoman Commander, ᶜAbd-Allāh Pāshā, followed Topāl Osmān Pāshā to a soldier's grave. By the autumn, although Baghdad and its port of Baṣra had eluded his grasp, Nādir considered affairs beyond Tabrīz well enough established for winter relaxation to be possible on the Mughān Plain. The holiday started with a vast hunt. It was to be followed by the greatest rite in Nādir's life.

NĀDIR SHĀH (1736–47)

In Iran when central government weakened and a period of *mulūk al-ṭavāʾif* (an interregnum of regional kings) began, a forceful tribal leader had scope in which to extend his sway. He could gain strength by raiding or hiring himself out to protect trade-routes. He might in the end become sufficiently well endowed

[32] Muḥammad Kāẓim, vol. 1, fol. 310b (p. 632).

with men and arms, money and the loyalty of those for whom he could provide security, to challenge whatever vestiges of an earlier hereditary power remained; but initially, if prudent as well as ambitious, he would maintain that established aegis as the means whereby, acting as its servant, he forged a cohesion of interests beyond his immediate group. Since 1726 Nādir had been doing exactly this. As Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān, legitimacy had been conferred on his enterprises and the support of numbers of Iranians ensured during the period in which he had been engaged in clearing Iran of enemies of the Safavid State. At Iṣfahān in September 1732 he had been at pains to prevent Ṭahmāsp's deposition disrupting the thread of legitimacy. He had endeavoured not to show disrespect for that legitimacy by any action which could be ascribed to his initiative alone. Ṭahmāsp had to be deposed because the price being paid for maintaining legitimacy through his sovereignty was proving too high. As the symbol of legitimacy ᶜAbbās III cost nothing and could not impede Nādir's acquisition of strength and glory under the child's weak auspices; but, for the sham not to seem too obvious, Nādir let it be understood that when the Turkish threat had been obviated, he would probably take steps for Shāh Ṭahmāsp's restoration. Ṭahmāsp, a prisoner in Khurāsān, need not despair to the extent of trying further intrigues against him; nor need others.

According to Muḥammad Kāẓim, Nādir at first kept thoughts of ascending the throne entirely to himself. He divulged nothing, even to his closest friends. It was after the great hunting-party on the Chūl-i Mughān that he unburdened himself to his most trusted intimates. He suggested the land needed a ruler and that he was the only man universally obeyed. The small group of friends included men like Ṭahmāsp Khān Jalāyir and Ḥasan ᶜAlī the Muᶜaiyir Bāshī. They did not demur, but Ḥasan ᶜAlī made no comment. Nādir himself pointed out that they were only a very few compared with the many in Iran who might not acquiesce in his going further, and who might prefer Shāh Ṭahmāsp or the prince, ᶜAbbās III. He asked Ḥasan ᶜAlī why he remained silent. Ḥasan ᶜAlī replied that it would be best to call all the leading men of the realm and get their agreement in a signed and sealed document of consent; Nādir could then ascend the throne "to the satisfaction of God and His creatures". This proposal looks exactly like the kind of advice a man of Ḥasan ᶜAlī's cloth, ostensibly on the side of legality, would offer. Nādir approved of its sagacity. The writers of the *Dīvān* (chancellery), who, Kāẓim says, included the historian, Mīrzā Mahdī Astarābādī, were instructed to send out orders for the military, religious and lay notables of the nation to assemble at Chūl-i Mughān. Kāẓim may not have been entirely fanciful when he mentions the lengthy talk which Nādir had later with

his brother Ibrāhīm, Kāẓim's employer. Ibrāhīm did not agree that the decline of the old régime and Nādir's labours in ridding Iran of enemies justified extinction of the Safavids and his enthronement. He reminded Nādir of Rustam's example. Rustam had defeated the Dīvs but had then restored the rightful ruler once those forces of evil had been overcome: ancient heroes maintained the dynasties for which they fought "out of chivalry, not to gain a name for themselves".[33]

Mīrzā Mahdī Khān states that Nādir's original intention was to hold a *quriltai* at which to canvass the proposal that, since his work was accomplished and the garden now cleared of weeds, it should be returned to its rightful gardeners. He would retire to Kalāt and prepare himself for the world to come. The Mughān Plain was chosen as the meeting place because of its size and abundance of fodder; the assembly was to be exceptionally large.

The sources agree on the main course of events followed in January, February and March 1736 in the great encampment that was set up near the confluence of the Aras and Kur (Kura) rivers. These events culminated in Nādir's coronation on 8 March. But Mīrzā Mahdī Khān takes refuge in brevity. His summary of what occurred excludes, not only Nādir's discussions with his henchmen and brother, but also the murder of the *Mullā Bāshī*, Mīrzā Abu ʾl-Ḥasan, and the drinking parties during which Nādir gained time and opportunity to plumb the minds and hearts of the chief men of Iran, to test their loyalty. Kāẓim says that Nādir had spies outside the tents, to catch what these men might say privately to each other when they returned to their quarters after the nightly festivities. It was through a tent wall that Mīrzā Abu ʾl-Ḥasan, the Safavid Mullā Bāshī, was heard foretelling evil of a family that would supersede the Safavid. His punishment was so swift, it seems that Nādir had only been awaiting a pretext. He was strangled the next day in the presence of Nādir and the whole assembly.

None of the sources lack evidence of Nādir's awareness that the Safavids' religious aura made usurpation hard to accomplish successfully. Mīrzā Mahdī Khān lists the preliminary doctrinal stipulations which Nādir had drafted before the question of the succession was discussed. He was aware of the Safavids' hold over the land which they had made predominantly Shīʿī, even to the point of uniting under their dispensation Ṣūfī and other sects which had always risked the charge of heterodoxy. He was aware of the menace to his own frontier-people which the religious rivalry between Shīʿī and Sunnī posed, when, for example, he had failed to beat the Turks or to capture Baghdad, so that he had to

[33] *ibid.*, vol II, fol. 5b (p. 22).

seek some form of workable relationship with these upholders of the Sunnī Order. He would precede his coronation, therefore, with the proclamation of a new faith for Iran.

It was designed to remove the odium of Shāh Ismāʿīl I's "heresy", the gift which the first Safavid Shah had imposed on Iran, and a principal element in his dynasty's charismatic and chiliastic appeal to the Iranian people. When Nādir promulgated the five points of his new Jaʿfarī Faith, he was careful to ensure that an Ottoman Ambassador and members of other religions were present at the assembly. Whatever else this ʿAlī Pāshā was to witness at Chūl-i Mughān, for Nādir a most important part of the Ottoman envoy's programme would be hearing the proclamation of the new religion. The coronation which followed was the signal for ʿAlī Pāshā's departure, accompanied by an Embassy to the Porte from Nādir, to convey news to the Sultan of the new sect's inauguration. Iranians were recalled to the succession of those Imāms *all* Muslims could revere and who included Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq. The new sect was to be called the Jaʿfarī and Iranians were henceforth to abjure the Shīʿī practice of cursing the first three Orthodox Caliphs, a practice hateful to the Sunnīs. Since, in the Kaʿba, the Four Schools of Islam were represented by four pillars, Nādir claimed that a fifth should stand for his new *maẕhab* (doctrine). Iran was to have the privilege, in common with Egypt and Syria, of nominating an *Amīr al-Ḥajj*, and Iranians were to have the same status and protection on the Mecca Pilgrimage as other Muslims. No longer were Sunnī peoples to arrogate to themselves the right of holding Iranians in slavery on the grounds of their not being orthodox; wherever either the Ottoman or Iranian authorities found Iranians or others wrongly subjected to the ignominy of being bought and sold, they were to manumit them. The two Powers, Ottoman and Iranian, were henceforth to accredit permanent ambassadors to each other. The religious proclamation was meant to serve more than one purpose, but that of easing relations with the Porte was vital.

The testing of opinion among the assembled notables continued for more than a month. The summonses had gone out in November 1735 and the notables began arriving in the Mughān in January 1736. The crowning took place after three weeks which must have left the multitude in a state of considerable apprehension; Kāẓim mentions notables being hauled before Nādir for the ordeal of testifying to their allegiance with a halter round their necks. Not even his boon companions were exempt from suspicious probing. He was desperately anxious to forestall future rebellion and eradicate lingering pro-Safavid sentiment by any means. Cajolery was not lacking. Neither were reminders, including the execution of the Mullā Bāshī, of how disloyalty would be punished.

Eventually the uncertainty was over. The offer to retire, now that the work of cleansing Iran of enemies was finished, was dropped. It had met with pleading that Nādir's firm hand should not be withdrawn from Iran's protection. Twelve days before the Vernal Equinox, the Iranian New Year, the coronation rite was performed and all prostrated themselves before the new king.

The terrible example of Nādir's extermination of the brave Bakhtiyārī rebel, ʿAlī Murād Khān, later in the same year illustrates how, whatever Nādir's own origins, his by then royal government saw fit to chastise a tribal dissident. But he did not make it a universal policy to "replace hereditary chiefs with local governors". In the delegation of governorships his policy seems to have been entirely one of expediency and therefore flexibility. For him expediency did, however, dictate the pattern which began to emerge as rebellions increased. Often in earlier days he had reinstated local governors after vanquishing them. This especially applied where Afghans were concerned, as in Herat, and was to be a feature of his methods in northern India. Later, as the case of Muḥammad Riżā Khān Khurāsānī's appointment to Erivan shows, he began to favour appointments of men close to himself, but for places remote from their own hereditary ties. They were not to be influenced by local loyalties, since Nādir required them to observe only one loyalty. The case of Taqī Khān Shīrāzī exemplifies a combination of this need and his quest for money, for while Taqī Khān was one of the wealthiest men in Shīrāz, he was of humble and despised origin, the son of a controller of water distribution who, as an agent of the chief revenue official, amassed riches in proportion to the antipathy he gained from the people he taxed. Thus Nādir could see Taqī Khān as one of the moneyed class of Shīrāz and yet owing that class no love: he was considered that class's enemy, as Mīrzā Muḥammad Kalāntar's description of him makes clear; and as ready to throw in his lot with Nādir as Nādir was ready to employ such a potentially useful man, who knew where money was to be found.

Nādir's subsequent visit to Iṣfahān, begun on 15 October 1736, was considerably taken up with financial matters: he was raising funds for the next major task, the campaign to Qandahar, the prelude to the conquest of India. He was now master in his own house with the regalia to prove it. He could establish his own rules of service for officers and men. Before setting out for Qandahar, besides giving senior officers costly gifts, he fixed troopers' (*ghaziyān*) pay (*mavājib*) at twelve tūmāns and their bonus (*inʿām*) at the same. The Mīn Bāshīs were to receive sums varying from a thousand tūmāns to five hundred, and at the lowest level, a hundred and fifty. He planned a three-year expedition, mainly financed through Iṣfahān, whose guilds contributed two million tūmāns.

Meanwhile Nādir's eldest son, Riżā Qulī, was raising a force for a campaign

to Balkh on funds raised in Mashhad. Nādir had been right to confide, when hesitating about assuming the crown, that there were many whose loyalty might be doubtful and whose lives he had impoverished while striving to clear Iran of foreign invaders. But to campaign in India would mean the removal of his costly and voracious army from his harassed subjects' immediate vicinity. It would be led where successes might show the people of Iṣfahān that their enforced investment had not been made unprofitably. Unfortunately, however, if such a profit were to accrue, Nādir had already taught his people so severe a lesson that capital would in future be kept as far from the prying eyes of government as possible. At the same time, as his soldiers became increasingly actuated by the desire for loot, the cost of paying them increased: Nādir had to pay more in order to counteract their temptation to hold onto spoils. Apart from the danger to the army occasioned by troops breaking ranks in pursuit of booty, he wanted the spoils of war exclusively for himself and for the expenses of government.

He set out on 21 November with 80,000 men and crossed the Sīstānī–Qandahar border on 3 February 1737. The siege of Qandahar began and, as if to demonstrate that Qandahar was only intended to be the base for a far greater expedition, on 11 May he sent Muḥammad Khān Türkmen to the Mughul Court, to bring forward the charge that the Indians had failed to prevent the flight into safety, of Afghan refugees from Iran.

The siege of Qandahar lasted long enough to prove that sieges were never Nādir's happiest military experiences. At Ganja he had only succeeded with the help of Russian engineers disguised as Iranians. Qandahar again showed what mud walls and bastions were capable of withstanding when assaulted by an army deficient in engineering techniques. The city did not succumb until March 1738. Ḥusain of Qandahar was sent with his people to Māzandarān. His city was left deserted, to make way for a new one of Nādir's own creation, Nādirābād. On 21 May he left for Ghazna. He had, as it happened in vain, urged on Muḥammad Shāh the return of his ambassador. He now crossed into Mughul territory on the pretext that it behoved Muḥammad Shāh to punish the Afghan fugitives.

This excuse is interesting. It, of course, illustrates Nādir's skill and foresight in having earlier developed a diplomatic gambit, to be activated whenever it suited him. His first communication, it will be remembered, with Delhi, after the expulsion of the Afghans, had been to ask that India be closed to them. He had kept this issue alive. He now used it in justification of his Indian expedition; but he justified this hostile act as if, in his eyes, it were not hostile. He used the pretext of the Afghans having been received in India to admonish Muḥammad Shāh in a patronizing manner for incompetence in not dealing effectively with

the refugee problem. He claimed that he was virtually compelled to enter the Mughul's realms, to do for the emperor what Muḥammad had proved incapable of doing for himself.

Paramount rulers in Iran try to ensure that states bordering it do not become scenes of disorder and sanctuaries for malcontents who might threaten Iran's security. Nādir's style of addressing himself to Muḥammad Shāh reveals that he saw the issue in these terms; or at least wished the Indians to think he did. The campaign was made to seem as if it were undertaken because of Delhi's inability to keep its own affairs in order; the manner in which Nādir was received by the notables in Ghazna and Kabul probably lent credence to this view. The Mughul officials ran away, but local dignitaries, who could not escape so easily from their homes, welcomed Nādir. They included members of the commercial classes. Nādir no doubt promised more efficacious government than distant Delhi could offer. When the conquest had been completed, the conqueror would be entitled to recompense for his trouble. Nādir seems to have adhered to this opinion throughout his dealings with the Mughul Emperor. Never more so than when, with due pomp, he reinstated that unfortunate man, who as a descendant of Tīmūr he claimed as a kinsman, after his own refusal of the throne. This act was Nādir's last before he left Delhi, a city which he had rigorously despoiled.

The progress into India was marred by bad news from northwest Iran which showed how insubstantial Nādir's gains in the Caucasus had been. In December 1738 he heard of his brother's assassination at the hands of the Lezgīs, who were to remain Nādir's most implacable enemies to the end. He appointed a fellow clansman in Ibrāhīm's place and gave him a Bughāirī khan as Commander-in-Chief. On 7 November, at Jalalabad, just before he entered metropolitan India, Nādir appointed Riżā Qulī his Viceroy in Iran. On 6 January 1739 Nādir left Peshawar for Lahore.

The long delay before Qandahar had been involuntary, but the leisurely pace of the march, from May to December, through Afghanistan to Peshawar was now accelerated. At Lahore, the governor gave Nādir twenty lakhs of rupees in gold after surrendering the city. Nādir left him in his governorship and also reinstated Nāṣir Khān as *ṣūbadār* of Kabul and Peshawar, with orders that he was to secure shipping and hold the Punjāb river-crossings in readiness for Nādir's return march. As if already in charge of the Mughul's northern provinces, he reappointed a disgraced governor, Fakhr al-Daula, to Kashmir. Lahore was behind the advancing host by 6 February and on the 24 February the battle of Karnāl was fought. Khān Daurān, one of Muḥammad Shāh's principal officers, was mortally wounded and the next day it was the Niẓām al-Mulk who arrived to

negotiate. It was agreed that Nādir should return to Iran with an indemnity of fifty lakhs, to be paid in instalments. On 26 February Muḥammad Shāh paid his first visit. He came again on 7 March and was then kept as Nādir's enforced guest. The delay in these proceedings gave Nādir the chance to ascertain that he need fear no resistance on entering Delhi, and to make certain of this by keeping the Mughul army outside the city while he surrounded their ill-sited camp in such a way that it became entirely dependent on him for food supplies.

On 9 March Ṭahmāsp Khān Jalāyir was sent with the ṣūbadār of Awadh into the city. Nādir and the Emperor moved to the vicinity of Delhi three days later. After resting in the Shalimar Bāgh, Nādir prepared to make his state entry on 20 March. The next day the khuṭba was read and coins were minted in his name, just over three years since the date of his accession to the Iranian throne had been signalled in the legend *al-khair fī mā waqaᶜa*, "The best is what has taken place." A witty but rash poet had changed this into *lā khair fī mā waqaᶜa*, "There is no good in what has happened," a deed for which, Kāẓim says, Nādir wreaked vengeance by having a number of "ᶜIrāqī", that is, central Iranian, poets put to death.[34]

This day's events apparently proved too much for the ṣūbadār of Awadh, Saᶜādat Khān. He died, either from wounds sustained at Karnāl or by suicide. Mīrzā Mahdī Khān notes that a collector was sent forthwith to his seat of government, Lucknow, and brought back one crore in gold which, he adds, equalled five hundred thousand tūmāns in Iranian money. Nādir was filling the Delhi exchequer, to which he held the key. Gifts and taxes from far and near, Mīrzā Mahdī continues, were pouring in, to be transferred to Nādir to the tune of fifteen crores, but towards the close of day on 21 March rumours spread in Delhi that some mishap had befallen Nādir. Mobs began to attack parties of the Qizilbāsh who were strolling in the streets. Corn-sellers were said to be involved in the disturbances which now broke out, and certainly it was on tradespeople and shopping areas, especially the jewellers' quarter, that the ruthless punishment Nādir ordered chiefly fell. On 22 March he supervised from the Raushan al-Daula Mosque a punitive massacre and the systematic looting of selected quarters. By 27 March the auditors' accounts were sufficiently complete for him to send instructions to Iran exempting its provinces from taxes for three years. He gave his soldiers arrears of pay and gratuities said to equal six months' pay. He now demanded the hand of the Emperor Aurangzīb's great granddaughter for his son, Naṣr-Allāh.

[34] Cited by Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, p. 103; cf. Mīrzā Mahdī Khān, p. 272.

There would be her dowry; the mulcting of Delhi was by no means at an end. Some people were assessed as high as fifty percent for the levy Nādir's agents and the *kūtvāl* of Delhi, Ḥājjī Fūlād Khān, were ordered to raise. The city was assessed at two crores and for the purpose of collection, divided into five districts. Lockhart reckoned that on aggregate a value of 700,000,000 (70 crore) of rupees was involved.[35]

Naṣr-Allāh's marriage took place on 6 April. By 12 May the business of collecting and assessing had been accomplished. In a grand durbar on that day Nādir restored Muḥammad Shāh to his much-impoverished realm. Four days later he departed, to reach Kabul on 2 December where he recruited to his army forty thousand Afghans. The long journey north had been slow and a quantity of the loot lost at river-crossings. At river-crossings and in defiles, Nādir apparently posted searchers in an effort to obtain as much as possible, especially coin and jewels, of the plunder individual soldiers were trying to take back for themselves. Nādir wanted the Indian conquest to provide him with funds. He was not willing that India should fund private pockets in Iran or make his men too rich for them to want to campaign any more; or, worse, rich enough to finance rebellion.

Stationed at Kabul, Dīra Isma^cīl Khān and finally Nādirābād from December 1739 to May 1740, Nādir concentrated on ensuring that his writ ran in the areas adjacent to Iran's southeastern border. It was not until February 1740 that he could bring the Kalhura chief from Sind, Miyān Nūr Muḥammad Khudāyār Khān, to heel. He then made this Khān disgorge treasures which included former Safavid jewels the Khān had obtained from dispersed Qandahārī Ghilzais. Nādir gained over a crore's worth in valuables. Khudāyār Khān undertook to pay ten lakhs in tribute besides, and to provide two thousand horses. At the end of this same February, Ṭahmāsp II, ᶜAbbās III and his brother Ismaᶜīl were put to death in Sabzavār, where the Safavid prisoners had been gathered for this purpose.

While Nādir was engaged in Sind, Riżā Qulī continued to campaign in the northern portion of Iran's eastern border, around Balkh and Andikhūd. The strategy for imposing Afsharid dominion over Andikhūd was to intervene in a local contest in support of one of the contending parties. He then established one of them, ᶜAzīz Qulī Dād Khān, as Governor of Andikhūd and tackled the reduction of Balkh against the background of this success. A major factor in the area was the intervention of Qipchāq and Uzbek leaders from the other side of

[35] Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, p. 152.

the Āmū-Daryā, the Oxus: the scene was already being set for Nādir's subsequent crossing of the river, to carry his arms into regions which succoured northern Iran's most troublesome neighbours.

The Governor of Balkh, Abu ʾl-Ḥasan Khān, was ready to submit, but not so his ally, Sayyid Khān the Uzbek. Sayyid Khān resisted so stoutly that in the end a price was put on his head. After one abortive attempt Balkh was finally gained and held, and in the context of both its first and second and more durable occupation, there is noteworthy evidence of the speed with which Riżā Qulī restored the city's commercial prosperity. The interference from across the Āmū-Daryā, however, induced in Riżā Qulī the not entirely unwarranted idea that to campaign towards Bukhārā must be the next move. Militarily this decision might have been justifiable if he had possessed sufficient arms and had been sufficiently prepared for so dangerous an undertaking in a region where the tribes were adept at supplementing the natural hardships with Fabian tactics. Ṭahmāsp Khān Jalāyir, whom Nādir had sent to supervise his son's activities, advised against what could only be seen as a foolhardy enterprise. Doubtless Ṭahmāsp also knew of Nādir's own plans for a campaign across the Āmū-Daryā, and the preparations that he had already started for it. Riżā Qulī could not have been ignorant of these plans either, but his impetuosity and perhaps a wish to be before his father prevailed over Ṭahmāsp's wiser counsels. This episode was probably as much as anything else the first sowing of Nādir's suspicions against his first-born. A jealous father saw in this expedition the desire of the son to outshine the parent whose most trusted lieutenant the son had disobeyed. When Nādir reached Herat on 19 May 1740, he showed his nephew, ʿAlī Qulī, and grandson, Shāhrukh, marked favour. Meeting Riżā Qulī in Badghīs on 26 June, he disgraced him and disbanded his special corps of brightly-accoutred troops. According to Kāẓim, Nādir also publicly reproached Riżā Qulī for the murder of Shāh Ṭahmāsp and his offspring.

Nādir's long absence from southern Iran encouraged revolts among the Arabs in the Gulf. In September, the Huwala Arabs mutinied and killed Nādir's admiral, Mīr ʿAlī Khān. Nādir's concern with naval operations has rightly been cited as a novel policy for a great Iranian ruler, and as evidence of a modern outlook.[36] He saw Iran as a distinct national entity. Its land and sea frontiers required constant attention for the preservation of an integrity, the destruction of which had, after all, set Nādir his initial task of reconstruction. Brought up in a border region, frontiers excited his vigilance; throughout his career he was

[36] Lockhart, "The navy of Nadir Shah".

never many miles away from one or other of Iran's frontiers, if not campaigning beyond. For naval operations, however, he was irksomely dependent on others: on Arab seafarers, and on Captain Elton, as will be seen below, for skill in naval construction, while he also used Indian shipbuilders. Once his admiral had been slain, the Huwala Arabs lapsed into what has, perhaps loosely, been termed piracy. Nādir had not yet finished with the Gulf, but his ultimate failure to achieve its policing left that duty to a future non-Muslim power. In the autumn of 1740 Nādir was in no position to arrest the collapse of his Persian Gulf policies. Far better equipped than Riżā Qulī had been, he had to embark on an expedition beyond the Āmū-Daryā, one which proved difficult even for such a general as he. He had sent orders from India for preparation of shipping for the river-crossing. This venture was as well planned and long-thought-out as all his other expeditions.

By October Nādir had defeated Abu ᵓl-Faiż Khān of Bukhārā, whom he reinstated, while careful to annex Chārjū, with its river-crossing, and all the territory south of the Āmū-Daryā for himself. He was making the Āmū-Daryā boundary secure and acquiring control of important bridgeheads. As usual, when he was among distant peoples, he took advantage of success to recruit fresh manpower, in this instance between twenty and thirty thousand Uzbeks. He also arranged a marriage alliance. Ṭahmāsp Khān, whom he had sent back to Kabul, was now put in charge of the north Indian acquisitions. The Mughul was not fulfilling his engagements and Nādir had to repeat his admonitions.

Apart from the kind of strategic arguments already advanced in the context of the Uzbek borderlands, since Iran had become a Shīᶜī State there had been the Central Asian rulers' belief in their right to enslave Iranian Shīᶜī captives. Khiva was, and for a long time after Nādir remained, a chief offender: the lands of the Khivan oasis were cultivated by Iranian slave-labour. Nādir had experienced trouble from the ruler of Khiva, Īlbārs Khān, before. The ruler of Shīrvān had encouraged Īlbārs to invade Khurāsān when Nādir was engaged on his first Caucasian campaign. When Nādir had turned his attention to Bukhārā, Īlbārs had come to Abu ᵓl-Faiż Khān's aid against him. Khiva was the source of troubles on the Khurāsān border, the scene of Nādir's original home and first training-ground. To campaign across the wastes of Khwārazm towards Khiva was therefore inevitable, and when, in November 1740, Īlbārs was finally forced to sue for peace, Nādir gave no quarter. He had his and twenty of his commanders' throats cut on the eve of entering Khiva, and Nādir released Russian as well as numerous Iranian captives. The Iranians he sent to found a township in the Darra Gaz district, Khīvaqābād. He left Ṭāhir Beg in what was

to prove a disastrous governorship at Khiva, and in December hastened back to Khurāsān.

During the spring of 1741 Nādir resumed promotion of his naval programme. Ships ordered at great cost arrived in the Gulf from Surat. Later, timber for the building of more was transported across Iran to the Gulf from the forests round the Caspian, a Herculean feat of porterage. But the reason for Nādir's hasty return to the realm from which he had so long been absent was the need to revisit areas in the Caucasus where the Lezgīs continued irrepressible. He reached Mashhad in January 1741 and on 14 March moved westwards towards Āẕarbāījān. The tax exemption granted from Delhi was illusory: Nādir's unceasing and growing needs meant no relief for his subjects. On 15 May, as the Court marched through the Māzandarān forests, the guards and the retinue were sufficiently strung out and the trees sufficiently thick for an attempt to be made on Nādir's usually well-guarded person. The shot was fired in the vicinity of Savād Kūh, but it only slightly injured Nādir. It had a far worse effect on his eldest son, against whom his rancour increased with time. The utmost care was taken to apprehend the would-be assassin. Nādir's determination to interrogate him was whetted by the conviction that Riżā Qulī had been implicated in the attempt. It was only in July of this year that the physician, ʿAlavī Khān, obtained Nādir's permission to retire and go on the Pilgrimage. Many regretted this departure: ʿAlavī Khān was one of the very few who could help Nādir in what appears to have been increasing infirmities and, more particularly, who could ameliorate the symptoms of what some saw as a disorder of the mind.

Nādir remained in the north-west from the summer of 1741 for over a year. He then once more embarked on conquest across Iran's western border. The seriousness of the situation in the Caucasus is shown by the size of the force with which he penetrated into Dāghistān in August 1741: 150,000 men. In October he reached Darband and in January 1742 he directed Taqī Khān Shīrāzī to go to Bandar ʿAbbās to organize the invasion of Oman; two more ships had arrived from Sind. Naval matters did not escape his attention in relation to the north. In July 1742 he established a partnership with Elton in an attempt to break Russian traders' monopoly on the Caspian Sea and to obtain supplies for a Ṭabarsarān campaign, from which he needed seaborne victuals. He captured Āq Qūsha in August, but by September it was evident that the season would not hold long enough for him to penetrate into Avaria. In October he withdrew to winter-quarters. During the winter respite he had an extremely unpleasant file to close. Nīk Qadam, his assailant in the Māzandarān thicket, had been found and

brought to the royal camp during the summer. He was interrogated, and Nādir considered that he had enough evidence to order Riżā Qulī's eyes to be put out. In November Nādir again marched north. Meanwhile, Taqī Khān Shīrāzī had taken the forts of Muscat and the son of one of Nādir's oldest companions-in-arms, Bābā ʿAlī Abīvardī, Kalb ʿAlī Khān, who was Governor of the southern region known as the Garmsīrāt, was directed to cross to the Arabian side of the Gulf, to oversee Baḥrain and Taqī Khān's activities.

The idea that perhaps he should plunge into war with Russia was given up when, early in 1743, ambassadors from the Porte made it clear that there was no likelihood of the Sultan's recognizing the Jaʿfarī Sect. The Turks had been careful and protracted in their negotiations. They had every reason to be aware of Nādir's power. They would also know the Persian saying that, the greater a man's roof, the heavier the weight of snow on it. Nādir may have thought of doing to the Ottoman capital what he had done to Delhi; as will be seen below, he did in fact threaten this, but it does not seem likely that he believed he could. The resources, not least in manpower, of the Ottoman Empire were depleted but still considerable enough not to escape notice in Nādir's unceasing preoccupation with military recruitment and budgets.

At this time war would have been inconvenient to the Porte, but, while it was not the Sultan who wished to play aggressor, the tragedy of the situation seems to have been that neither did Nādir. Reiteration of the demand for recognition of the Jaʿfarī sect was generally accompanied by the explanation that, if the religious difference could be resolved, the two neighbours could live in amity. To achieve this seems to have been Nādir's overriding objective, but not at the cost of ceding to the Turks territory they had snatched from Iran in enmity to the Safavids or after the Safavid's fall; nor at the cost of neglecting to ensure the safe passage of Iranians through Ottoman lands. He considered the Turks had taken advantage of Ismāʿīl the Safavid's "heresy" to wrest from Iran the regions of Ardalān (Kurdistān) and Āẕarbāījān, to which they had no right, a point specifically mentioned in the Peace Treaty he and the Sultan eventually concluded. Provided, however, these matters could be adjusted, he desired only peace with the Turks. Peace in the west would be particularly valuable if, as seems likely, the settlement of Khiva and Bukhārā were among his aims. His sense of belonging to the world and heritage of Tīmūr was well as his upbringing made Central Asian problems very real to him, and he knew from experience where the main threat to Khurāsān's prosperity lay. It is at the end of a section dealing with how, during the year 1158/1745–6, Nādir had once again been urging on the Sultan his wish for Iran and Turkey to be friends, that Mīrzā

Mahdī Khan introduces the arrival of ambassadors from Khotan. They came, he says, to discuss the danger to his and their lands from the unsettled condition of Turkistan. They pressed for a clearly defined border between Nādir's sphere of influence in that region and dominions further to the east.[37]

Although disinclined to continue conflict, the Ottoman government, which had its own serious fiscal and economic problems,[38] was wary of the strong ruler who had restored Iran's power. They therefore tried to contain this new power by the indirect means of promoting the Lezgīs' guerrilla tactics against Nādir and his deputies. Meanwhile they temporized, as in the embassy of January 1742, when nothing was conceded or demanded. Nādir disliked this negative approach and threatened to visit the Sultan in person to settle the religious question. Although Mīrza Mahdī Khān, almost as if it were one of the signs of Nādir's growing mental disorder, says that he really did envisage a campaign as far as the Bosphorus, Nādir went no further and the next year the Porte's attitude was far more categorical. Nādir's claim that the Jaᶜfarī rite should be given status in the Kaᶜba at Mecca was finally rejected. There had been changes of ministers in the Ottoman Court, but it is also possible that the effects of the Caucasian diversions on Nādir's plans were becoming apparent; Istanbul never lacked intelligence agents in that region or in the Central Asian Khanates, where Nādir's control was far from complete.

Nādir responded to the 1743 Embassy in a very positive fashion. He appeared before Kirkuk on 5 August with a force of over 300,000.[39] Success at Kirkuk left Mosul the next target. Its siege began on 14 September but was lifted a month later because reports reaching Nādir discouraged a stalemate beyond Iran's western border; the way Nādir had to exercise and uphold his power demanded mobility, and he knew the dangers of being delayed in one area too long.

Ṭāhir Beg at Khiva had been murdered, but Nādir's operations on the western marches were more urgently jeopardized by the revolt in Shīrvān, led by a pseudo-Safavid pretender called Sām Mīrzā and adherents who included Muḥammad, the son of Surkhāʾī. Sām's claim to be one of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain's numerous offspring is not borne out by the texts, but he had earlier engineered a movement at Ardabīl where Nādir's nephew, Ibrāhīm, had seized him, cut off his nose and sent him on his way. The Mīrzā had gone into Dāghistān. Joined by enemies of Nādir, he and Muḥammad Surkhāʾī had surprised and killed Ḥaidar Khān, the Governor of Shīrvān, and Nādir was obliged to depute his commanders from Tabrīz, Urmīya and Ganja to contain the rebellion. The rebels were

[37] Mīrzā Mahdī Khān, p. 414. [38] Olson, *The siege of Mosul*, pp. 21–9. [39] *ibid.*, pp. 123–4.

defeated in December 1743 near Shamākhī, but Sām escaped, to infiltrate a disaffected group in northern Georgia. Nādir's Georgian vassals, Ṭahmūraṣ (Taimuraz II of Kakheti) and his son, Erekle, were then still loyal. They put down this movement at the end of December and captured Sām Mīrzā. When they brought him to Nādir, they were rewarded with Kartli and Kakheti for this and other services. Since Nādir was by this time aware of another pseudo-Safavid prince being groomed by the Turks at Qārṣ (Kars) to enter Iran and cause him further distraction, he deprived Sām Mīrzā of one eye but left him the other, and contemptuously sent him to Aḥmad Pāshā at Qārṣ so that the "spurious brothers might see each other".[40]

This second Ottoman-supported pretender was Muḥammad ʿAlī Rafsanjānī who had appeared in 1729 at Shūshtar in the guise of Ṣafī Mīrzā, claiming to be Shāh Ṣultān Ḥusain's second son, although most authorities concur that Ṣafī Mīrzā was put to death by Maḥmūd Ghilzai when he massacred all the Safavid family save the deposed Shah and two young princes in February 1725. Muḥammad Kāẓim is at variance with others when he makes the genuine Ṣafī Mīrzā escape with his brother Ṭahmāsp from Iṣfahān on 2 June 1722, and says that this real prince raised the Lurs against the Turks at Hamadān and Kirmānshāh so successfully that the Lur chiefs began to fear his ascendancy and had him murdered in the bath in 1727. Muḥammad Kāẓim is alone in suggesting that this, the first of three "pretenders", was who he claimed to be. A third "Ṣafī Mīrzā" was supported by the people of Khalīlābād and their apparently naïve leader, Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Bakhtiyārī. This pretender had formally to be denounced by Shāh Ṭahmāsp and Nādir, so formidable had he become in the region of the Kūhgīlūya. He was put to death in early autumn, 1727. Muḥammad ʿAlī Rafsanjānī, also based on Shūshtar, was able to make his escape to the Ottoman authorities in Baghdad, by whom he was kept, to be used when Nādir threatened Mosul. Nādir remonstrated with Aḥmad Pāshā about this hostile promotion of a fictitious Safavid pretender and this second "Ṣafī Mīrzā" died some twelve months later; Sām Mīrzā lived to see yet another day.

These were not Nādir's only problems: by January 1744 Taqī Khān Shīrāzī was in open rebellion in Fārs, having had Kalb ʿAlī Khān murdered. He had landed at Bandar ʿAbbās from Muscat and marched on Shīrāz, diverting his attention from Fasā and other districts, whose revenues he had designed to pre-empt, so that he could reach Shīrāz and foil an attempt by Nādir's lieutenants to secure the city before he did. Nādir directed extra forces against Shīrāz, but to no

[40] Mīrzā Mahdī Khān, p. 402.

avail. Taqī Khān held out for four months, with the help of Qizilbāsh elements within the beleaguered city. Nādir sent no less a person than Mīrzā Muḥammad ʿAlī, the *Ṣadr al-Mamālik*, with a promise of safe conduct if Taqī Khān would capitulate. He refused and in the end Shīrāz was surrendered, to be so pillaged and ruined by Uzbek, Afghan and Türkmen troops that the Kalāntar, an eye-witness, says worse had not happened since the days of Chingiz Khān, the worst impact of whose depredations Shīrāz, in fact, escaped. Taqī Khān, for whose obduracy many in Shīrāz blamed the desecration of their city, survived to serve a new dynasty in Afghanistan.

Also in January 1744, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār, the son of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, brought in the Yamūt Türkmens and disaffected Qājārs among whom he had been living in the deserts beyond Astarābād, and seized that place from its Governor, Zamān Khān. Nādir had to order Bihbūd Khān Chāpshalū from the Atak region of northeastern Khurāsān to go and regain the city, which Bihbūd managed to do once some of Muḥammad Ḥasan's Qājārs defected to him. Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān in the end retired to those same deserts whence he had come, and where he remained until after Nādir's death.

In July 1744, after he had appointed Naṣr-Allāh, his son, to Shīrvān and these disorders had been contained, Nādir resumed the Turkish war. He laid siege to Qārṣ but at the onset of a peculiarly severe winter, the siege was raised after diplomatic exchanges. Nādir remained in the region during the cold season which was such that Mīrzā Mahdī Khān says that the water in a fish's belly would have frozen.[41] The Lezgīs thought that they were immune in such weather to attack from Nādir. They once more learnt the contrary and, after chastising them, he received and forgave them in January 1745, before he went to Darband.

He spent the next spring near Shamākhī, but, when the army moved towards Erivan, Nādir was so ill that for part of the way he had to travel in a *takht-ravān* (litter), although he recovered his health sufficiently for this only to be a temporary expedient. At about this time he entrusted Khurāsān to his son Imām Qulī, and ʿIrāq – the central region of Iran – to his nephew, Ibrāhīm Khān. During the last days, as his distrust of everybody grew, he increasingly selected his deputies from close kin and fellow clansmen. In August 1745 he engaged the Ottomans for the last time, in the person of Yegen Muḥammad. He cut off his supplies by surrounding his army at a place not far from Erivan, near where

[41] *ibid.*, p. 405.

ᶜAbd-Allāh Pāshā Küprülü had been killed in one of Nādir's first successful encounters with Turkish generals. Yegen Pāshā's death left his men leaderless and at Nādir's mercy. Besides heavy slaughter, many were taken prisoner. Nādir had the opportunity of exercising what in the light of the next move must be considered diplomatic clemency: he released the weak and wounded and gave them safe conduct back to Qārṣ. Of the remainder, some four thousand, Mahdī Khān says, were sent to Tehran while others were settled in Tabrīz. This success was followed by peace proposals and the treaty which at last brought Nādir's warfare with the Porte to an end.

In the meanwhile ᶜAlī Qulī Khān, the son of Nādir's brother, Ibrāhīm, and the favoured nephew, had been sent to Khwārazm, where the Yamūt Türkmens had taken advantage of the collapse of Nādir's arrangements, to raid the Khivan oasis. ᶜAlī Qulī had driven them off, but in their flight they had simply been forced to return to the region of Astarābād. Nādir enlisted a legion of their best young men in his own bodyguard and had others punished for their bad behaviour. He reached Iṣfahān and in February 1746 returned to Mashhad. In the spring season he made a short visit to Kalāt where he inspected the cash and jewels he had stored there. Then he went back to Āẕarbāījān and at Sāūj Bulāgh met the Ottoman envoy, Naẓīf Effendī, to discuss peace. The preliminaries were followed by an exchange of gifts. Nādir's gift to the Sultan included a dancing elephant from India.

The Treaty was concluded in January 1747. Its terms contained no reference to the Jaᶜfarī Rite, but reference was made more than once to the status and protection of Iranian pilgrims and other Iranian travellers through Ottoman dominions, now that the Shīᶜī practice of cursing the first three Caliphs of Islam had been prohibited in Iran. The frontiers between the two realms, which had been impaired by the Turks on account of Shāh Ismāᶜīl's having "incited" them to war, were to be recognized in the form in which Nādir had left them. Each party was to refrain from aggression and peace was to be perpetual. Pilgrims both from Iran and Central Asia ("Tūrān") passing by way of Baghdad and Syria were to be given every protection and facility. The two states were to furnish each other's envoys with their expenses. Captives were to be exchanged and frontier governors enjoined not to commit unfriendly acts. Pilgrims, whether to Mecca or the Holy Places in Mesopotamia, the ᶜAtabāt ᶜĀliyāt, were not to be charged dues contrary to the laws of the Faith unless they were carrying merchandise. If they were, they, in common with regular merchants, were only to be charged the lawful amounts and no more.

The conclusion of this peace was opportune for Nādir. In March 1746 Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān "Kayānī" of Sīstān had rebelled when asked for more revenue than he could raise. Mīrzā Mahdī Khān, whose text for these last days, except in those portions where Kāẓim's is singled out, is closely parallel to that of Muḥammad Kāẓim, ascribes the decline in Nādir's character to the anguish he suffered after blinding Riżā Qulī Khān; although the episode of the attempted assassination, which became the pretext for this deed, is also seen as a sign that Nādir's attitude towards his subjects had changed for the worse. No longer benign towards them, they no longer looked on him with gratitude. Instead, rebellion became commonplace; Taqī Khān's in Shīrāz; that of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Qājār's son, Muḥammad Ḥasan, in Astarābād; the revolt in Shīrvān, where the people had murdered Nādir's governor, Ḥaidar Khān Afshār, and replaced him by Muḥammad, the son of Surkhāʾī Lezgī.

Mīrzā Mahdī Khān says that these events only served to inflame Nādir's rancour at a time when his conduct "had fallen from the natural order, and the way of compassion was shut".[42] As if he knew the end was near, and was determined to collect and hoard as much wealth as he could, his thirst for revenue became the driving-force in a career of astonishing cruelty. The country was terrorized and ruined by his tax officials who, when the Shah reached Mashhad for the last time, were in their turn terrorized. They had to render their accounts under torture and were then paid for their services with death.

ʿAlī Qulī Khān, Nādir's nephew, and Ṭahmāsp Khān Jalāyir had been sent to quell the rising of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān in Sīstān. In June 1746, on his way from Iṣfahān to Khurāsān through Kirmān and Yazd, Nādir himself had suppressed risings in those regions, and his progress left towers of skulls to mark the manner in which this last great tax haul was being conducted. The Sīstānī troubles proved less tractable. Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān had been captured and killed, but his rebellion was continued by his lieutenant, Mīr Kūchik. Then, revenue officials, either out of fear of Nādir or because they saw this as a means of destroying his two favourites, charged ʿAlī Qulī and Ṭahmāsp Khān with owing the Treasury sums they could not possibly pay. ʿAlī Qulī, aware of Nadir's obsessive severity over revenue, knew that nobody could expect any quarter and decided that the only course of action was to revolt. At first Ṭahmāsp Khān sympathized with him but before long he found himself incapable of disloyalty to the man whom he had so long served with such fidelity. He advised ʿAlī Qulī to desist, but ʿAlī Qulī silenced this unwelcome counsel by poisoning its author. He then went to Herat where he ensconced himself in April 1747.

[42] *ibid.*, p. 422.

Nādir was then at the end of his journey to Mashhad and embarking on the inquisition of his collectors. Muḥammad Kāẓim says that at this point, on his arrival in Khurāsān, he made what many students of Iranian history might see as a classic error: he sent tax-gatherers among the Kurdish tribesmen, 140,000 of whom, Kāẓim says, had assembled in the vicinity of Khabūshān. Many of them fled, but the Chamishgazak notables, who included Muḥammad Jaᶜfar Sulṭān Zaᶜfarānlū, Ibrāhīm Khān Kaivānlū, and Muḥammad Riżā Khān Bādlū, decided upon rebellion. Nādir, therefore, had to march on Khabūshān. Kāẓim reports that he had sent his grandson, Shāhrukh Mīrzā, to Kalāt with an abundance of treasure but that, realizing how every hand was turned against him except the Afghan and Uzbek contingents in his army, who were the only ones he still trusted, he himself wished to follow Shāhrukh to that great fortress. He gave orders for mounts to be prepared so that he and his family might leave during the night, while the army was on the march to Khabūshān. It seems an unlikely story, but it is interesting because Kāẓim makes "Ḥusain" (Ḥasan) ᶜAlī Beg, the Muᶜaiyir Bāshī, whose survival of the next events is remarkable, the agent by whom Nādir was dissuaded from pursuing this plan of escape.

The royal concourse reached Fatḥābād, within two farsakhs of Khabūshān, on 10 Jumādā ᵓl-Ukhrā 1160/30 June 1747 New Style. That night Nādir's guard officers were Muḥammad Beg Qājār-i Erivānī, Mūsā Beg Īrlūᵓī Afshār Ṭārumī, Qūcha Beg Kavandūzlūᵓī Afshār Urūmī and Ḥusain Beg Shāhvār. Mīrzā Mahdī Khān says that it was on a signal from ᶜAlī Qulī Khān, who in fact succeeded his uncle as ᶜĀdil Shāh (1747–8), and with the connivance of Ṣāliḥ Khān Qiriqlū Abīvardī and Muḥammad Qulī Khān Afshār Urūmī, the Head of the Guards, that in the night of 30 June–1 July 1747 these men entered Nādir's tent and murdered him.

This is not the place to embark on a detailed discussion of the long-term effects of Nādir Shāh's campaigning beyond the frontiers of Iran. The next section will furnish some indication of the results within Iran of his tumultuous reign, and it could be argued that Russian penetration into the Caucasus and eventual permanent acquisition, to the detriment of the Ottoman Empire, of the Crimea were both partly consequences of his wars against the Porte and expeditions in the Caucasus; it was in connection with one of the former that Russia for the first time invaded the Crimea, upon contingents from which the Sultan relied. Nādir's capture of Delhi and humiliation of the Mughul Emperor certainly contributed to the ultimate displacement of the last vestiges of Mughul power in the sub-continent.

THE AFSHARID LEGACY

When Nādir moved tribes from the grounds with which they were historically associated, he seems to have had four main motives. Strengthening the frontiers, generally taken as one of the Safavid rulers' motives for transplanting tribes,[43] does not seem to have been of first importance to Nādir, whose settlements did not always comprise people from other Iranian regions; he settled captives from Khiva in Khurāsān, for example. One motive was certainly related to means of preserving his power. By moving rebellious Bakhtiyārīs from their traditional strongholds in the fastnesses of the Zarda Kūh, he dissociated them from their traditional power-bases. That such movements were predominantly to Khurāsān reveals two other possible motives: the desire to make his home province more prosperous by increasing its pastoral population; and perhaps the calculation that, infiltrated by groups lacking strategically useful local knowledge and contacts, potentially troublesome tribes already established in Khurāsān would find it harder to confederate against him. In the first context it has to be said that like Riżā Shāh (1925–41) Nādir never forgot whence he originated. Similarly Riżā Shāh paid special attention to the prosperity of his native Māzandarān. In the second context, Nādir, with a sense of shifting tribal allegiances as astute as in his circumstances it was necessary, no doubt considered the introduction of captive diluting elements attractive.

Speculation about his possible fourth motive arises from the tribesmen's need and regard for urban centres, to which to purvey pastoral products and whence to obtain manufactured goods, not least arms and accoutrements; and from Nādir's own concern to acquire the wealth concentrated in cities as commercial and manufacturing emporia. At Qandahar he constructed Nādirābād. A city was planned for Kalāt. The Khivan captives were to be settled in the new township of Khīvaqābād.

Acquisition of wealth was requisite for the retention of power. No loyalty was given freely. So completely did Nādir submit to and promote the mercenary principle that, while the rumour as well as the reality of his hoarded treasure caused Khurāsān years of distraction following his death, the habit of freely given patriotic service in Iran tended to become the exception rather than the rule. This legacy, in the absence of any dynasty capable of inspiring the loyalty

[43] See further, Perry's discussion of forced tribal movements in *Iranian Studies* VIII no. 4 (1975), pp. 199–215. The observations made in this section should be read in conjunction with the information on the migratory population of Iran at this period given by Richard Tapper, see pp. 507–15.

once given to the Safavids, remained in the 19th century to be deplored by Europeans as much as to be exploited by them; although it must be said that once Iran's status as a "buffer state" became an Anglo-Russian aim, efforts were made by both these powers to ensure a stable succession to its throne.

As for the Safavid aura, its pervasiveness and habitation in men's minds made its latent threat to Nādir's dominion difficult to eliminate, especially when it manifested itself in fictitious pretenders used by Nādir's enemies to embarrass him. A device he tried against conservative clinging to a power which many saw as the only legitimate sovereignty, was that of demanding, on the eve of his coronation, signed and sealed declarations of fealty to himself and his descendants. Of the latter, the one who continued a greatly reduced and weakened Afsharid rule for some forty-six years owed the possibility of doing so not least to Safavid descent through his mother. Nādir, with no such advantage, needed recourse to countering fears of his subjects' lack of loyalty by making them more afraid of him than he was of them. As his reign of terror worsened, desertions from his army, which no one dared report to him, increased. Contemporary annalists marvelled at how a régime founded on such a scheme of terror and so degraded could endure as long as it did. There are, however, other examples in modern Iranian history of the Iranians' capacity for patient endurance of prolonged periods of harsh rule. From Nādir's excesses one man in his camp, Aḥmad Khān Sadūzai Abdālī, appears to have learnt a lesson. As Aḥmad Shāh (1747–73), the founder of the Durrānī dynasty of Afghanistan, he exercised a policy of often sorely tried but seldom withheld clemency.

It is the historian of Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī, Maḥmūd al-Ḥusainī, who emphasizes that, afraid of the influence of men who might have been seen as legitimate leaders, Nādir conferred leadership on members of tribes of low standing.[44] He promoted those who, recognizing in him the sole source of their advancement, would be least likely to defect. Yet such men were among those who plotted his assassination.

Nādir gave ample evidence of being too shrewd not to perceive the failure of his stratagems to secure perfect hegemony. Mīrzā Mahdī Khān and particularly Muḥammad Kāẓim attribute his later, as they saw it, mental disorder to anguish after he had ordered the blinding of his first-born son. Maḥmūd al-Ḥusainī, the servant of Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī, Shāhrukh Shāh Afshār's protector, ascribes what he terms Nādir's melancholia (*mālīkhūliyā*) and distempered humour (*saudā*ᵓ) to a different cause: his failure to subdue the Lezgīs of Dāghistān who

[44] Maḥmūd al-Ḥusainī al-Munshī, *Tārīkh-i Aḥmad Shāhī*, vol. 1, fol. 13b (p. 34).

had slain his brother, Ibrāhīm. No doubt all these three observers of the horrors of Nādir's last years felt compelled to explain his conduct as insanity: the mind of a great man had become unhinged.

Yet when the barrenness of the efforts of a life-time of unremitting service is considered, it is perhaps not surprising that the increasing violence and cruelty of Nādir's later conduct were such that people attributed them to madness. If, towards the end, he realized how his vast ambitions had foundered, despair enough to induce madness might have gripped him. His endeavours had proved unavailing. Baghdad and Erzerum had eluded his grasp. Ottoman pashas were still entrenched there. Predators from Turkistan still raided Khurāsān. Iranians, among them some of those who had been most in his confidence, found courage to rebel against him. He had gained no lasting dominion in either the Caucasus or Transcaspia, both the scenes of some of his most extraordinary as well as gruelling marches. In Iran he had once been welcomed by the mercantile and sedentary elements of the population as a guarantor of safety from invaders and marauders. In the end, these people must have found it hard to distinguish between Afshārs and the Ghilzais from Afghanistan whom Nādir had expelled. Nādir failed to establish Afsharid, just as Tīmūr had failed to consolidate Timurid rule.

One indication of Nādir's failure was the need forty-eight years later for Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār to reconquer the Caucasian cities which Nādir had regarded as focal centres in Iran's north-western defences: Tiflis, Ganja and Erivan. Nādir also saw Marv as the key to the north-eastern defences. Beyond Marv he tried, as he played on a fancied common Mughul–Timurid ancestry, to secure as his vassal the ruler of Bukhārā, and as his ally in the pacification of those Türkmen raiders so familiar to Nādir from his early youth and later as supporters of the Qājārs of Astarābād. More than this, his, and after him, Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār's attitude towards Bukhārā was irredentist. At the end of the First World War what was considered the repossession of Bukhārā was an aspiration expressed by Iranian diplomats at the time of the Versailles Conference. Nādir may even have thought that, if only the Ottoman power in the west could be contained, he might make Bukhārā a base for conquests further afield in Central Asia. His immediate successor, ʿĀdil Shāh, entertained the idea of embarking on campaigns across the Āmū-Daryā, the River Oxus, in spite of complete inability to undertake them. Mīrzā Mahdī's mention of envoys from Khotan has already been alluded to,[45] and Muḥammad Kāẓim reports rumours,

[45] See above, p. 46.

brought by merchants, that China viewed Nādir's power with apprehension. Muḥammad Kāẓim was concerned with Central Asian affairs because he originated from the city of Marv. He goes into more detail than Mīrzā Mahdī Khān about Nādir's despatch of artisans to Marv to prepare for a campaign into Kashgaria. Such an expedition did not materialize, but Nādir frequently sent men and money to Marv in efforts to restore its prosperity and reconstruct its dam, a task which defied all his engineers' endeavours. Marv did not become prosperous and Khiva was still a prison for captive labourers from Iran in the middle of the 19th century, when a mission went from Tehran to negotiate their repatriation.[46] The Russians eventually achieved the pacification which Nādir, saddled with an economy ruined under the later Safavids and their Afghan supplanters, and not ultimately bettered by him, was unable to accomplish.

He tried to obviate the consequences of the Safavid–Uzbek conflict that had arisen under the Shāhs Ṭahmāsp I and ᶜAbbās the Great. Had he succeeded in obscuring the sectarian difference between the two sides of the border which Safavid espousal of Shiᶜism had brought into prominence, he might have accomplished more in Transoxiana, but this is doubtful. The problem of general economic recession in Central Asia, Iran and Asia Minor was deep-seated, and it was coeval with Europe's maritime-based expansion. Nevertheless, the border on which he had received his early training might have become less contentious but for two factors he was unable to control. His ambition to create an Iranian empire with its fulcrum in the northeast was frustrated by Iran's ultimate refusal to accept him, and by the presence in the west of the Ottoman Empire, which it seems to have been Nādir's intention either to balance with an equally imposing Iranian imperialism or at least to neutralize. There was an irony, which does not appear to have escaped Nādir's notice, in his and the Ottomans' shared language and ethnic origins; but his apparent distrust of his Persian-speaking subjects surely stemmed from more than a sense of ethnic difference. The cases of Ḥasan Khān, the Muᶜaiyir Bāshī, and Muḥammad Taqī Khān Shīrāzī stand out as examples of his readiness to trust Iranians when he was convinced, not so much of their loyalty, for that was a characteristic in which he had little cause to place his faith, but of their competence and energy.[47] Inefficiency and feebleness were not pleasing to this stern man.

Another frustrating factor for Nādir Shāh lay in regional differences which his policies, although in some instances aimed at diminishing them, combined to promote. Safavid religious policy had been a unifying force. Nādir chose to

[46] See Schefer, *Relation de l'Ambassade au Kharezm de Riza Qouly Khan.*

[47] Maḥmūd al-Ḥusainī, vol. 1, fol. 7a (p. 21), concerning the talents of Taqī Khān Shīrāzī.

show contempt for it; the events in Iran of 1979 may serve as reminders of the danger inherent in flouting religious sensibilities. Meanwhile, the tribesmen whom he had transplanted did not forget homelands which they returned to as soon as they could. Iranians in the central and southern regions nurtured resentment at what seemed a Khurāsānian régime supported by Uzbeks and Afghans. It was also unpopular among the people on the shores of the Persian Gulf and in Āẕarbāījān. The people of Shīrāz, and of Shūshtar in Khūzistān, never wanted Nādir. The merchants of Tabrīz, who once had, no doubt became disillusioned. Iṣfahān and other cities paid a terrible price for his Indian campaign. The response of the regions to Nādir's career developed into the recrudescence of a regionalism that has frequently broken out on the removal of strong rule and which in this instance was encouraged by contention among Nādir's heirs and former officers.

There is, however, a paradox here. Nādir could not accomplish the restoration of Tīmūr's ephemeral Central-Asian-Khurāsānian imperium, of which a significant effect had been the splitting of Iran into a western and eastern division that was eventually healed by the Safavids. This chapter will conclude with Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār's restoration of the province of Khurāsān to an Iran which it had been his task again to reunify after the collapse of Nādir's dominion had once more splintered it. Yet, notwithstanding Nādir's failure to achieve unified and enduring sovereignty, and in spite of Iran's exhaustion and disintegration after and before him, his expulsion of the Ghilzai Afghans and the Ottoman Turks contributed a great deal to the final separate identity of Iran as a modern national state. After Nādir and the interregnum which followed his death, the Qājār revival of the unity which the Safavids had achieved again became feasible: Central Asia had been lost, Afghanistan had become a national entity on its own, Nādir had raided India but not retained it, and the Caucasus was soon to be forfeited once and for all. These were all areas which Nādir believed should render Iran allegiance and tribute. His inability to keep them in tutelage made the eventual refashioning of a distinct Iranian state possible in a manner which his preoccupation with trans-frontier campaigns might have appeared to preclude.

Although some of the Safavid symbols that haunted Nādir were spurious, toys exploited by unscrupulous leaders for purposes other than what they might have stood for in the eyes of an oppressed and pious population, they should not be overlooked. Nādir's annalists, not least those contemporary with him, paid these phenomena a degree of attention which reveals more than personal

predilection or, in the instance of Marʿashī, ancestral respect. As men who belonged to the non-tribal and non-martial classes, these authors conferred on real and false Safavid pretenders a place in history as the representatives of an Iranian need for unity, continuity, hierarchy and well-ordered government sanctified by tradition.

At first Nādir won gratitude among many for appearing to have restored the Safavid state and cleared Iran of invaders. Gratitude turned into dismay when he tried to obfuscate the religious differences on which Iran's identity had come to rest, and when his "Timurid" ambitions and consequent craving for conquest blinded him to the country's need for peace and stability. Shaikh Ḥazīn describes an economy already ruined at the very time when Nādir extended his internal conquest of the usurping Afghans into a programme of costly foreign expeditions. India produced a weight of plunder, but forays into Dāghistān and against Baghdad, Mosul and Kirkuk were a drain without any tangible compensation. It was his resumption of campaigns in these regions that put the finishing touches to the picture of Nādir, not as his country's benefactor, but as a ruler who demanded increasingly excessive rewards for services in which many of his disillusioned subjects must have been unable to see any purpose save Nādir's own aggrandizement.

If to some he ultimately presented the image of, after all, simply a freebooter from a remote part of Khurāsān, the falseness of such an image only makes it more tragic. Not everyone failed to benefit from a career which it is impossible to treat with contempt: Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī was shrewd enough to avoid Nādir's mistakes. He did not embark on wars far from home which were beyond the capacity of his economic base. But he followed Nādir's example in tapping India to strengthen that base. Moreover, he was judicious enough to use Iranians whom Nādir's occupation of Afghanistan had afforded a home there while Nādir's tyranny made them prefer exile. It is significant that during his brief reign in Khurāsān in 1750, Sulaimān II excused his inability to repel Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī's influence on the grounds that to do so might have embarrassed an Iranian colony of "scribes and soldiers" in Kabul.[48] Nādir had sent Taqī Khān Shīrāzī to Kabul as revenue collector after he had suppressed this same official's rebellion in Fārs. After Nādir's assassination, until he died some eight or nine years later, Taqī Khān continued in the service of Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī. He assisted him as an intermediary in Khurāsān and later resumed

[48] Marʿashī, p. 126.

charge of the Kabul revenues. He died in disgrace, but the Durrānī showed compassion to his descendants in a family whose financial expertise made condoning their faults expedient.

Muḥammad Taqī Khān Shīrāzī quarrelled with Nādir's kinsman, Kalb ʿAlī Khān, when the latter had been sent to collect Nādir's share of the commerce of the Persian Gulf and, in particular, of the Baḥrain pearl fisheries. Profits were accruing which Taqī Khān had no desire to relinquish. As master of Shīrāz he could intercept the southern riches before they reached his powerful patron, but it was under the latter's aegis that Taqī Khān enjoyed control over the southern seaboard's economy. He was certainly a beneficiary of Nādir's rule. That he was not alone in this appears evident from the time and energy Nādir devoted to extracting from his subjects the capital which they doubtless became the more adept in concealing the more demanding Nādir's agents became. After the Indian expedition, in spite of the searching of the baggage of the returning troops, coins and precious objects must have found their way into private hoards.[49] Servants of Nādir must have known this, otherwise not even the most sadistic and those most in awe of Nādir would have unremittingly continued to try and extort what did not exist. Unfortunately, in reaction to Nādir's extortion, the tendency on the part of Iranians who possessed capital to withhold knowledge of it from the government was strengthened, to persist, to the detriment of Iran's economy, to modern times.

The revolts against Nādir were due to other factors besides disenchantment with him. Notably, those least vulnerable to attack from Central Asia or Asia Minor wanted to conserve their gains on a regional basis. Nādir's awareness of this may explain the route he chose for his last journey from Iṣfahān to Mashhad. It may explain, if it does not justify, his ruthless revenue demands on the south-eastern cities of Yazd and Kirmān. Various parts of Iran refused to repeat sacrifices for whatever schemes Nādir might have had for the safety and well-being of the whole. His crown lacked the legitimacy to which an appeal might have elicited extremes of sacrifice further to those he had already been able to compel. In any case, the belief spread that Nādir was practising extortion for his own and his family's enrichment and to retain the loyalty of alien tribal contingents from outside the pale of the Shīʿa faith: Türkmens from over the border, Afghans and Uzbeks.

Withdrawal of his Iranian subjects' trust forced him to rely more on these people than he was probably inclined to anyway. His preference for them was

[49] See above, p. 41. Cf. Avery and Simmons, "Persia on a Cross of Silver", pp. 267–8, reprinted in Kedourie and Haim, *Towards a Modern Iran*, pp. 11–12.

not new, but it became so obvious that his death seems certainly to have been precipitated by apprehensions among the Iranians in his camp, of some move on the part of his favoured forces against them. It also seems likely that the rumour of his plan secretly to retire from the camp enlarged apprehensions of his conduct. As soon as news of Nādir's murder was known in the camp, the Afghans and Uzbeks took the offensive under Aḥmad Khān Sadūzai Abdālī, the future Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī. When the latter perceived that escape was his best course, he led off his men with as much ordnance as he could acquire. Units of Nādir's army stationed elsewhere dispersed, as did those which had been with him near Khabūshān. This dispersal of the formidable Afsharid host augmented the sufferings of the Iranian people which were their principal legacy from "the last great Asiatic conqueror".

ᶜĀDIL SHĀH (1747–8): SHĀHRUKH SHĀH (1748–50): SULAIMĀN II (1750): SHĀHRUKH SHĀH (1750–96)

Immediately after Nādir's death, with celerity pointing to the possibility that he might have been implicated in the murder, his nephew ᶜAlī Qulī Khān reached Mashhad from Herat. Nādir's surviving sons were put to death, but of his grandsons Shāhrukh, aged 13, was spared and imprisoned in Mashhad. Nādir's eldest son, Riżā Qulī's offspring, Shāhrukh, had for his mother Fāṭima Sulṭān Begum, a daughter of Shāh Sulṭān Husain. Shāhrukh's cousin, ᶜAlī Qulī Khān, is credited with the perception that the people might reject his sovereignty in favour of that of an Afsharid of Safavid descent. Hence he spared Shāhrukh's life. ᶜAlī Qulī was in fact proclaimed as ᶜĀdil Shāh two weeks after Nādir's death. Besides the still rebellious Kurds of Khabūshān, he had famine to contend with in Khurāsān. The hostile moves in Māzandarān of Ḥasan Khān Qājār and his Göklen and Yamūt Türkmen allies afforded ᶜĀdil Shāh a pretext to march out of the famine-stricken province into Māzandarān after a brief interlude of festivity in Mashhad and boast of undertaking conquests further afield that he would never be able to realize. His operations against Ḥasan Khān ended in the Qājār's return to the *yurts* of his Türkmen allies, but Ḥasan Khān's young son, Muḥammad, was captured and owed to ᶜĀdil Shāh the castration whereby the future Muḥammad Shāh Qājār became known as *Āghā*, the eunuch.

ᶜĀdil Shāh had sent his brother, Ibrāhīm Khān, to secure Iṣfahān. This was a mistake. He had thus endowed his brother with a base whence Ibrāhīm Khān could compete with him for power. ᶜĀdil Shāh sent a Georgian *ghulām*, Suhrāb, to poison Ibrāhīm, but the latter was apprised of the plot and had Suhrāb put to

death. Units of Nādir's army, from the Garmsīrāt in the far south and Kurdistān in the west, on their way to ʿĀdil Shāh found a new master in Ibrāhīm Khān before they reached Mashhad. Assured of these forces, Ibrāhīm Khān captured Kirmañshāh, which was looted, and colluded with Nādir's governor in Āẕarbāījān, Amīr Aṣlān Khān Qiriqlū, against ʿĀdil Shāh. ʿĀdil Shāh met their combined forces between Sulṭānīya and Zanjān and was put to flight, later to be taken prisoner and blinded: his brief reign ended before the year of Nādir's death had expired. Aṣlān Khān was allowed to take the fallen Shah with him on his return to Āẕarbāījān. Ibrāhīm later repented of this when he began to suspect that with ʿAdil Shāh Aṣlān Khān might have gained access to a quantity of the Afsharid treasure. Ibrāhīm therefore turned against his ally and defeated him near Marāgha. He had Aṣlān Khān put to death, but his profession that for him the only legitimate sovereign was Shāhrukh was not credited in Khurāsān, which Ibrāhīm now hoped to dominate. There the authorities refused to send him Shāhrukh, to whom he expressed the desire to offer fealty in person, but without distancing himself from his central Iranian base.

Instead, a combination of Kurdish, Türkmen and Bayāt chiefs with the notables of Khurāsān enthroned Shāhrukh at Mashhad in early October 1748. The exercise of government was chiefly in the hands of these chiefs. By December Ibrāhīm Khān declared himself Shah. A situation developed in which Uzbeks, Afghans and Qājārs based west of Khurāsān were at war with the Kurds and Türkmen based within it. Shāhrukh was generous with treasure. The appeal of his Safavid descent no doubt played a part in attracting deserters from Ibrāhīm's army. Defeated near Simmān, Ibrāhīm became a fugitive whom Sayyid Muḥammad, the *mutavallī* (custodian) of the shrine of the eighth Imām, ʿAlī Riżā, at Mashhad, refused admission to the shrine city of Qum.

Sayyid Muḥammad's mother was a daughter of the Safavid Shah, Sulaimān I (1666–1694). He had succeeded his father as mutavallī of the Mashhad shrine and had co-operated in ʿĀdil Shāh's accession, but the latter had chosen not to leave him behind in Mashhad and he had been present at Ibrāhīm Khān's defeat of ʿĀdil Shāh and had remained in central Iran. Shāhrukh meanwhile was in the hands of those chiefs who had been his original supporters, and their rivals in Khurāsañ, who included ʿAlam Khān Khuzaima, and also Ḥasan Khān Qājār. The latter had deserted Ibrāhīm Khān and joined Shāhrukh under whom he received high office. ʿĀdil Shāh had eventually been brought to Mashhad where he had been put to death at the behest of Nādir Shāh's widow, in revenge for his murder of her sons, Naṣr-Allāh and Imām Qulī, in the holocaust of Nādir's male descendants at Kalāt which preceded ʿĀdil Shāh's assumption of sovereignty.

Ibrāhīm Khān was made captive and died, or was slain, when being brought to Mashhad during Shāhrukh's brief period of deposition in 1750.

Shāhrukh's deposition resulted from a temporary alliance between ᶜAlam Khān ᶜArab Khuzaima, who had succeeded in acquiring influence over the Shah, and certain Kurdish and Jalāriyid chiefs. These men conspired to assume control of Khurāsān, a project which they considered other chiefs in the Shah's confidence, for example, Ḥasan Khān Qājār, would certainly obstruct. Two of the latter, Qurbān ᶜAlī Khān Qājār and Qāsim Khān Qājār, became aware of the conspiracy but failed in their attempts to win Shāhrukh. For the conspirators had determined to establish Sayyid Muḥammad as their own puppet sovereign, in spite of Ḥasan Khān Qājār's admonition that if Shāhrukh's government were to be rendered ineffective, Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī would enter Khurāsān from Afghanistan and perhaps threaten the whole of Iran. Sayyid Muḥammad reigned for a few months as Sulaimān II before he in his turn was deposed as a result of the machinations of the chiefs and possibly because of his assiduity in attempting to revive the revenues of Khurāsān and improve their administration in order to ameliorate the depressed economy. He was allowed to live out the rest of his life near the shrine in Mashhad and died some thirteen years later. He had not been held responsible for the blinding of Shāhrukh, which occurred, probably when someone had attempted to release Shāhrukh from prison, while Sayyid Muḥammad, Sulaimān II, was absent from Mashhad.

Sayyid Muḥammad was also blinded, but when opponents of ᶜAlam Khān ᶜArab Khuzaima removed him, Shāhrukh's recent blinding did not hinder their restoration of the latter to the throne. For his public audiences arrangements were made whereby his infirmity was concealed. Shāhrukh became dependent on the support of the principal architect of his restoration, Yūsuf ᶜAlī Khān Jalāyir, a kinsman of Nādir Shāh's once faithful henchman, Ṭahmāsp Khān the Vakīl. ᶜAlam Khān ᶜArab Khuzaima fled to his home-base in Qāᵓin. Once he had lost the support of his fellow conspirators among the Kurdish khāns, he was powerless. He had recourse to Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī, whom he visited when Aḥmad was investing Shāhrukh's governor in Herat. Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī entered Khurāsān and, whether or not on this occasion he thought of taking advantage of the situation that was troubled by rival khāns and their conflicting tribal allegiances, this, the first of his three interventions, terminated in the decision not to linger in Khurāsān, during what was only the third year since he had crowned himself in 1747 as Aḥmad Shāh, *Durr-i-Durrānī*, "The Pearl of Pearls", exchanging the cognomen Abdālī for Durrānī.

Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī's policy towards Khurāsān seems to have developed

into one of keeping that province of Iran under Shāhrukh as his protectorate, and as a buffer state between his newly fashioned Afghan dominion and the rest of Iran. With Khurāsān, where on his first intervention he had succeeded in finding an appreciable number of Nādir Shāh's jewels in Khabūshān, subservient to him, he was free to pillage Delhi in 1756, as a punishment for the Mughul ʿĀlamgīr II's recapture of Lahore. While he thus resisted the temptation to penetrate deeper into Iran, he made it his purpose to prevent incursions from central Iran into Khurāsān, where he steadfastly guaranteed Shāhrukh's throne. It is a final irony of the Afsharid legacy that this former officer of Nādir's army should have been able to form the Durrānī kingdom of Afghanistan out of the eastern vestiges of Nādir's conquests, and maintain the rule in Mashhad of Nādir's grandson: the Afghan was loyal to the last to his former master's heir.

Aḥmad Shāh's son, Tīmūr Shāh (1773–93) and his grandson, Zamān Shāh (1793–1800) had their concerns in India and Kashmir to occupy them, while under Zamān Shāh's short reign the Durrānī monarchy was precipitated into decline. Thus there was no help from that quarter when in 1796 Āghā Muḥammad Qājār took Mashhad without a battle and had Shāhrukh tortured so that he might reveal where, to the last gem, the remains of Nādir's treasures were concealed. At Simmān, where his reign had opened with Ibrāhīm Khān's defeat in 1750, the blind Shāhrukh expired as he was being led away a captive. At last the Qājār was master of an Iran once more united under one paramount power, for the other dynasty which might have stood in the way of complete Qājār ascendancy over Iran, that of the Zands, had already been eliminated.

CHAPTER 2

THE ZAND DYNASTY

THE POWER STRUGGLE IN POST-NĀDIR IRAN

Scarcely any of the great conquerors of history can have destroyed his life's work quite so completely as Nādir Shāh did in the months before his death. His unreasonable exactions and barbarous suppression of the ensuing provincial revolts spread disaffection to every corner of his realms, and finally brought his own nephew, ʿAlī Qulī Khān, at the head of a rebel army, to the borders of Khurāsān itself. His short-sighted favouritism towards his new Afghan and Uzbek contingents, over his long-suffering Iranian officers and men, split his own army irreparably and was the immediate cause of his assassination.

The morning after this event (11 Jumādā II 1160/1 July 1747 New Style),[1] his heterogeneous army, encamped at Khabūshān, rapidly disintegrated. The detested Afghans fought their way clear under Aḥmad Khān Abdālī, who, as Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī, later seized the eastern half of Nādir's domains; their compatriots in the Mashhad garrison were prudently allowed to retire by the governor and Superintendent (*mutavallī*) of the shrine, Mīr Sayyid Muḥammad, who from now on was to play an important rôle in the troubled politics of the former capital. The bulk of the Iranian contingents, notably the Bakhtiyārī under ʿAlī Mardān Khān, struggled back to Mashhad, and initially gave their support to ʿAlī Qulī Khān who, with many promises and much largesse, was enthroned as ʿĀdil Shāh a few weeks later.

But the new ruler soon disappointed many of his early adherents; he lacked his uncle's imperious magnetism to pull together the surviving elements of a sprawling and exhausted empire. Instead of marching to secure the old Safavid capital of Iṣfahān, he delegated control of the city to his brother, Ibrāhīm, and remained at Mashhad to make merry, while his large unemployed army reduced city and surroundings to near-famine, murmurs of discontent rising everywhere. Late in 1747, ʿAlī Mardān Khān sought permission to lead the Bakhtiyārī home, and was refused. The whole contingent nevertheless set off, routed a pursuit force, and defiantly returned to the Zagros ranges, where Ibrāhīm Mīrzā

[1] Christian dates are reckoned by the Gregorian Calendar (New Style); hence Julian Calendar dates from Russian sources, or English sources before 14 September 1752, have been corrected.

was already recruiting support from his Iṣfahān base to challenge his brother's title.

The Bakhtiyārī were already a formidable force in Iṣfahān itself. Chief among them was Abuʾl-Fatḥ Khān of the Haft Lang, whom Ibrāhīm left as his viceroy in the capital on setting out against ʿĀdil Shāh in the spring of 1748.

Another Zagros tribal group which returned from Khurāsān to their home ranges at this time were the Zand. A minor pastoral people wintering on the Hamadān plains, centred on the villages of Parī and Kamāzān in the vicinity of Malāyir, they have been variously classified as Lurs and as Kurds: both Lurī and Kurdish-speaking groups bearing the name of Zand have been noted in recent times, but the bulk of the evidence points to their being one of the northern Lur or Lak tribes, who may originally have been immigrants of Kurdish origin. They are, in any case, distinct from the Failī Lurs of Khurramābād.[2] They first appeared during the anarchy consequent upon the Afghan invasion of the 1720s. The Ottoman Turks had occupied Kirmānshāh, but were constantly harassed by a band of 700 marauders based on Parī and Kamāzān, led by Mahdī Khān Zand. Their patriotic guerrilla war declined into brigandage when Nādir expelled the Turks, and in 1732, he sent a force to punish them. Four hundred tribesmen were put to the sword and the tribal leaders and a considerable number of families transported to northern Khurāsān. Here, at Abīvard and the valley of Darra Gaz, they remained in exile for the next fifteen years, prey to Türkmen raiders, while their khāns and fighting men had to follow Nādir's train in endless campaigns.

At the time of Nādir's murder, the Zands in Darra Gaz comprised some thirty to forty families, and leadership in this exodus devolved upon Karīm Beg, eldest son of Ināq who, with his younger brother Budāq, had jointly ruled the tribe before their exile. No record survives of the march home, which like that of ʿAlī Mardān's Bakhtiyārī was most probably forbidden by ʿĀdil Shāh; Karīm Beg, now entitled Karīm Khān, is next seen in active competition with the other tribal heads of ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam (western central Iran) who were carving out their own principalities with the calculated assistance of the more ambitious Ibrāhīm.

Karīm's first major clash came when he rejected an alliance proposed by Mihr ʿAlī Khān Tekkelū of Hamadān. Twice defeated by the Zands, Mihr ʿAlī called in the help of Ḥasan ʿAlī Khān, the Vālī of Ardalān (as the hereditary governor of Iranian Kurdistān had been styled from Safavid times). For six weeks, the hit-and-run tactics of the Zand cavalry harassed the Kurds until a rebellion at home

[2] Cf. John Malcolm, *History* II, p. 122; Minorsky, articles "Lak" and "Lur" in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1st edition.

forced the Vālī to retire. Karīm was now joined by an erstwhile rival, Zakarīyā Khān, who held Burūjird and Kazzāz, and by 2000 Qarāgūzlū from the Hamadān district. Together they marched south on Gulpāygān, a strategic point on the road to Iṣfahān, which also marked the limit of ʿAlī Mardān's expansion towards the former capital since his return from Khurāsān. Karīm defeated a Bakhtiyārī force and took over Gulpāygān. However, he was forced to hurry back immediately to meet another attack by Mihr ʿAlī Khān. This time he decisively defeated the Tekkelū and took Hamadān; but he had lost the initiative in the south to ʿAlī Mardān, who now seized Gulpāygān and prepared to besiege Iṣfahān.

By early 1750, the fate of what had been Nādir's empire was largely settled. Ibrāhīm Mīrzā had defeated and deposed his brother near Zanjān, in the summer of 1748 and, a year later, had himself been crushed near Simnān by the forces of Nādir's only surviving grandchild, Shāhrukh. Although blinded and temporarily deposed in 1750 in favour of a Safavid claimant, Sayyid Muḥammad, the Superintendent of the shrine, Shāhrukh was maintained on the throne of ruined Khurāsān by various coalitions of self-seeking warlords until his death at the hands of Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār in 1796. Neither he nor Sayyid Muḥammad, while briefly in power as Shāh Sulaimān II, made any attempt to restore Afsharid authority in western Iran which, with the return of its tribal manpower from Nādir's army and the resurgence of Iṣfahān as the political centre, was ready to reassert its position as the heartland of a restored Safavid empire. Nādir's usurpation of the monarchy had outraged all classes except the freebooters – increasingly Sunnī Afghans and Uzbeks – upon whom he based his power, and Iṣfahān, "half the world" to the Safavid Shah, had never reconciled itself to being subordinate to Mashhad. As the centre of gravity shifted, Khurāsān, Nādir's strategic and political centre, found itself automatically relegated to the status of an impoverished province peripheral to the divergent halves of the last great Asiatic empire. To the east lay the expanding realms of the Afghan monarch, Aḥmad Shāh, who from January 1751 asserted his military supremacy in Khurāsān itself and preserved the rump Afsharid state as a buffer against the west. The west, which comprised Āẕarbāījān and the Caspian littoral, the Zagros, Khūzistān and the Persian Gulf coast and all territory inland as far as the Kavīr and Lūt deserts, was recovered by a coalition of Zagros tribes dominated briefly by the Bakhtiyārī then, for the next forty years, by the Zand.

The main military prize in this region was the fortress of Kirmānshāh, which had been Nādir's base and arsenal in his campaigns against the Turks. Dominating not only the routes through the Zagros to Baghdad, but also that between

the centres of Kurdistān and Luristān, it was, in addition, well stocked with arms and munitions. It was held, nominally for Shāhrukh Shāh, by Muḥammad Taqī Gulistāna and ʿAbd al-ʿAlī Khān Mīshmast. With the help of the Vālī of Ardalān, they had already repulsed an attack in 1749 by the Zangana tribe, and were determined not to relinquish their charge until it became clear who would prevail in the complex struggle for power.

Gaining the chief political prize, Iṣfahān, was also a problem. ʿAlī Mardān's first attempt to reduce it, in the spring of 1163/1750, met with a severe check at Mūrchakhūr. From Gulpāygān, he sent messages to his local rivals, including Zakarīyā Khān and Karīm, who accepted his proposed alliance and, with their arrival, increased his number to 20,000. Towards the end of May 1750, this force faced the army of Iṣfahān on the plain to the west of the town, and completely routed it. After a few days' siege Iṣfahān was stormed; Abuʾl-Fatḥ Khān and the other leading citizens prepared to defend the citadel, but ʿAlī Mardān's offer of generous terms if they surrendered and co-operated soon brought them out to confer with their new masters.

Abuʾl-Fatḥ enjoyed the support both of the Bakhtiyārī in the city and of the Afsharid loyalists, if indeed any were left. Karīm Khān, though not mentioned by any of the Europeans present at the capture of Iṣfahān, had evidently risen to pre-eminence among the ranks of ʿAlī Mardān's Lurī lieutenants. These three therefore constituted from the outset an alliance, in which mutual trust came second to expediency. Their first action was to set up a Safavid puppet monarch to gain popular confidence. Two or three of the minor princes of this house were still left in Iṣfahān, the sons of a former court official, Mīrzā Murtażā, by a daughter of the last Safavid Shah, Sulṭān Ḥusain. The younger or youngest of these, a youth of about seventeen by the name of Abū Turāb, was selected as the most suitable for the throne – presumably as the most tractable – and despite his mother's tearful protests was proclaimed Shah, under the name of Ismāʿīl, on 29 June. The East India Company's agent in Iṣfahān dismissed him as "no more than a conspicuous Name, under which Ally Merdan Caun carries on his Tyranny, with the greater Shew of Justice".[3]

ʿAlī Mardān assumed the title of *Vakīl al-daula* as the sovereign's supreme executive. Abuʾl-Fatḥ retained his post as civil governor of the capital, and Karīm Khān was entrusted with the subjugation of the rest of the country as *sardār* (commander) of the army, though ʿAlī Mardān retained his Bakhtiyārī

[3] East India Company, *Gombroon Diary* VI, 10 September 1750. See also *Lettres Édifiantes et Curieuses* IV, pp. 345–6, 356–9; Nāmī, *Tārīkh-i Gītī-Gushā*, pp. 14–16.

forces. But for the moment, Karīm was in a position to subdue the northern portion of ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam he had already chosen for Zand hegemony. For the third and final time, he defeated Mihr ʿAlī Khān Tekkelū and occupied Hamadān. Negotiations at Kirmānshāh, though conducted courteously on both sides, failed to secure the fortress, and the Zands set off for a campaign in Kurdistān before the winter should set in. The Vālī, Ḥasan ʿAlī, was ill-prepared and welcomed his new suzerains with diplomatic compliance, but the Zand army sacked and burned Sanandaj and laid waste much of the environs before retiring to winter in their home territory.

Since Karīm had left Iṣfahān, ʿAlī Mardān had redoubled his extortions, bearing most heavily on Julfa, which Karīm had accorded fair treatment on the fall of the city. More significantly, he had deposed and killed Abuʾl-Fatḥ Khān and replaced him in office by his own uncle. Finally, in contravention of an oath the triumvirate had sworn not to act without consultation, he had marched independently on Shīrāz and was subjecting the province of Fārs to systematic looting. Replacing the governor and his lieutenants, the Bakhtiyārī chief began to extort the equivalent of three years' taxes and innumerable "presents", and to requisition all the raw and manufactured materials his army needed. Of the officials and headmen who had not already fled, a dozen were blinded in one eye during this period.[4] However, on his way back from pillaging Kāzarūn, ʿAlī Mardān was stopped at the steep and narrow pass known as the Kutal-i Dukhtar by an ambush of local musketeers under Muzāriʿ ʿAlī Khishtī, headman of the nearby village of Khisht. He lost all his booty from Kāzarūn and three hundred men, and had to retreat through the wreckage of Kāzarūn and take the mountain route over the Zarda Kūh range towards Iṣfahān, his ranks further thinned by desertion and the mid-winter weather.

Meanwhile, Karīm Khān harangued his lieutenants on the perfidy of ʿAlī Mardān, and in January 1751 entered Iṣfahān at the head of his augmented army to put an end to extortion and near-anarchy. The following month he met his rival in his own Bakhtiyārī mountains and attacked the depleted and dispirited band. The young Shah, whom ʿAlī Mardān had taken with him, fled over to the Zand ranks together with his *vazīr* Zakarīyā Khān and other notables, and the Bakhtiyārī were routed. ʿAlī Mardān and his henchmen, including the Vālī of Luristān, Ismāʿīl Khān Failī, fled to Khūzistān. A few of the captured rebel chiefs were blinded or executed, but the Bakhtiyārī soldiery as a whole were

[4] See Kalāntar, *Rūznāma*, pp. 41–3.

treated with a generosity which was becoming typical of the Zand Khān's policy.

The early months of 1751 thus mark the beginning of Karīm Khān's rule as viceroy of the nominal king Ismāʿīl III, a position to be hotly disputed for twelve more years but never wrested from him. From Iṣfahān he appointed provincial governors and nominated his kinsmen commanders of the armies in the Zand homeland, the Zagros provinces and the approaches to the still unsubdued Kirmānshāh fortress. Local dignitaries came from all over ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam to pay their respects to the new Shah and his Vakīl. The myth of a rival government in Mashhad had died a natural death.

THE CONTEST FOR HEGEMONY IN WESTERN IRAN, 1751–63

ʿAlī Mardān had meanwhile gained support and fresh levies from Shaikh Saʿd of the Āl-Kathīr, the Vālī of ʿArabistān (Khūzistān). In the late spring of 1752 this new force set off with the Lurs of Ismāʿīl Khān towards Kirmānshāh, and made friendly contact with the fortress. An attack on their base camp by Muḥammad Khān Zand failed miserably, and after replenishing his stocks the Bakhtiyārī chief left his unwilling hosts at the fortress and continued into the Zand homeland. Near Nihāvand he was met by the main Zand force under Karīm Khān, and was completely routed. Once again ʿAlī Mardān was forced to flee into the hills, and thence to Baghdad.

At this juncture, a new and potentially more redoubtable enemy confronted the Zands. Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār, elder and only surviving son of Ṭahmāsp II's first Vakīl al-daula, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, had by now extended his sway from Astarābād, on the north-western marches of the Afsharid kingdom, to include Māzandarān and Gīlān as far as Rasht and Qazvīn. Drawn by appeals for help from Kirmānshāh, he arrived at the head of a small force within a day's march of the Zand army just as it had resumed its siege of the fortress. Leaving his clients the Kalhur and Zangana tribes to prosecute the siege, Karīm marched with his main force to meet this threat. The Qājārs refused battle and retired straight to Astarābād. Although the campaigning season was already well advanced, the Zand leader determined to press home his advantage and invested the fortress of Astarābād for two months. A stalemate was reached: supplies were running low in the fortress, and the Zands for their part were constantly harassed by Türkmen irregulars, but neither side would yield anything in negotiations. Finally, Muḥammad Ḥasan took the field and, by a feigned flight which drew the Zands into a Türkmen ambush, utterly routed his attackers. The

Vakīl and less than half his battered forces straggled back to Tehran, leaving in Qājār hands his *roi fainéant* Ismāʿīl III.[5]

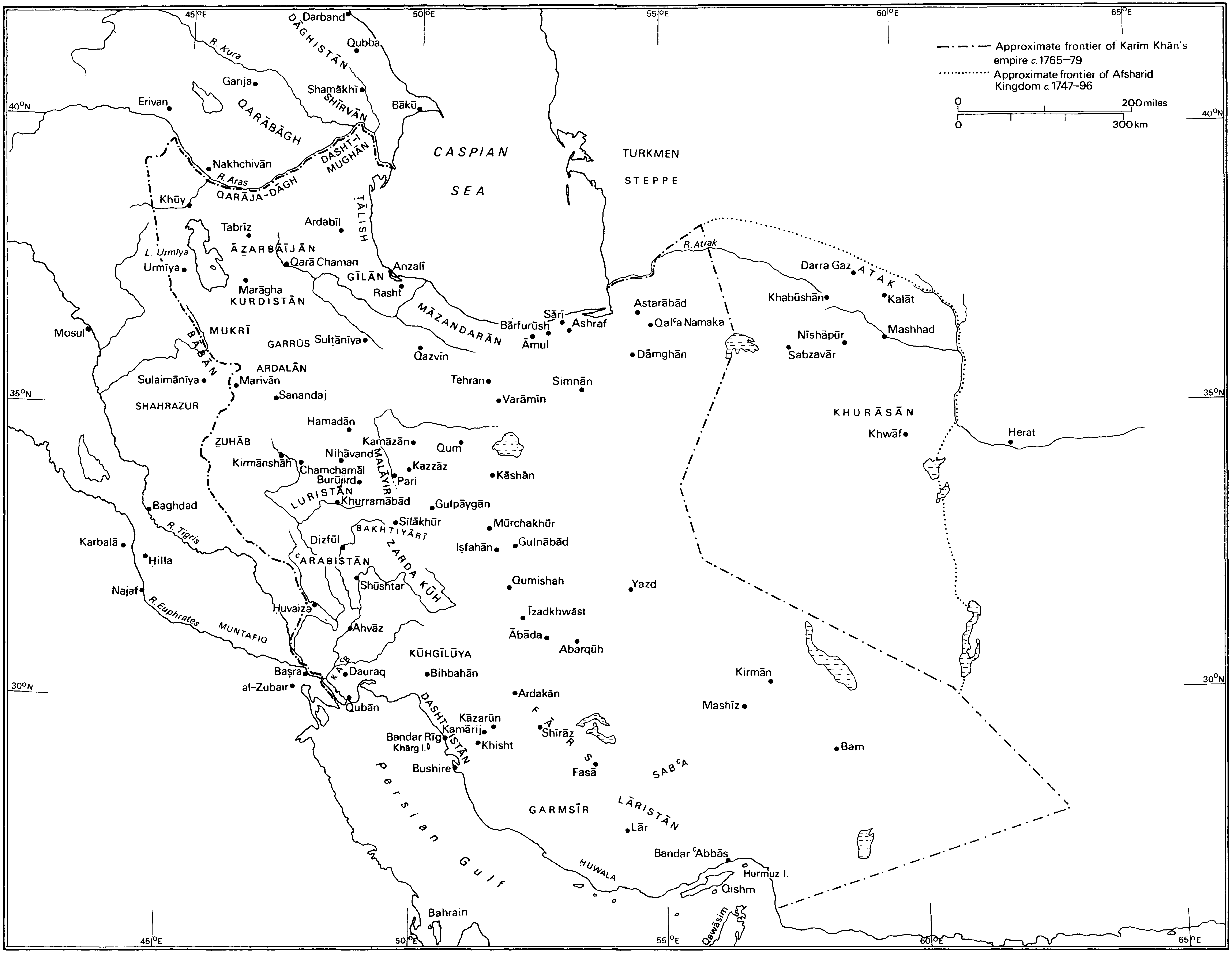
The Qājārs did not follow up their victory, and after wintering in Tehran Karīm received word that ʿAlī Mardān Khān was raising an army in Luristān to challenge him again. Early in 1753, he returned to Iṣfahān to keep a watch on this threat and on the progress of the siege of the Kirmānshāh fortress.

Meanwhile, in Baghdad political intrigues were afoot to support the military threat to the Zand regency. Under the enlightened and shrewd Sulaimān Pāshā, the city of the Caliphs had become a refuge for victims of Nādir Shāh in his later years and, more recently, for many who judged it unwise to risk public life in the Iran of his successors until the present chaos cleared. Among these was Muṣṭafā Khān Bīgdilī Shāmlū, who had been on his way as ambassador to Istanbul to ratify the peace treaty of 1746 when he learned of Nādir's assassination. A few years later appeared another refugee, who gave himself out to be a son of Shāh Ṭahmāsp II. He claimed to have been spirited away from Iṣfahān by a loyal retainer at the time of Maḥmūd's massacre of the Safavid princes in 1725, and to have lived in Russia until after Nādir's death. Whether they believed his claim or not, he was a heaven-sent opportunity for the Pasha to fish in Iran's troubled waters, for Muṣṭafā Khān to return home as a man of consequence, and for ʿAlī Mardān when he arrived in flight from the field of Nihāvand to settle accounts once and for all with his Zand rival. All three espoused his cause, proclaimed him Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain II, and began to recruit an army with which to place him on the throne of Iran.[6]

Contact was established with the beleaguered garrison of the Kirmānshāh fortress, and the encouraging promise given that the royal army would soon march to their relief. The Zands redoubled their efforts to take this obstinate outpost, but to no effect and in the spring of 1753 ʿAlī Mardān and Muṣṭafā Khān, reinforced by the Lurs of Ismāʿīl Khān, and with the promise of help from Āzād Khān, set off over the Zagros with their royal protégé. Then suddenly Sulṭān Ḥusain II revealed himself as quite unsuitable – whether mad, nervous or otherwise unco-operative is not clear – to be passed off as a Safavid monarch. The march slowed as new contingents, denied access to the prince, deserted in droves.

Karīm Khān, doubtless aware of these developments, finally advanced from Iṣfahān, sending ahead an ultimatum to the defenders of the Kirmānshāh fortress. Two years of siege had taken their toll, and with no hope of relief by ʿAlī

[5] Gulistāna, *Mujmal al-Tavārīkh*, pp. 205–15; Nāmī, pp. 28–30.
[6] Gulistāna, pp. 243–50; Qazvīnī, *Favāʾid al-Ṣafaviyya*, foll. 73b–75b.



Map 1. Iran under Zand rule, 1751–1795

Mardān's depleted rabble, Muḥammad Taqī and ʿAbd al-ʿAlī capitulated to the Vakīl, whose generous terms were scrupulously observed. Continuing westwards, Karīm confronted ʿAlī Mardān's forces when their last hope – Āzād Khān and his Afghans – was still two days away, and scattered them without difficulty. Muṣṭafā Khān was captured, but ʿAlī Mardān yet again made his escape, taking with him the Safavid pretender. Finding him a useless burden, the Bakhtiyārī chief later blinded this unfortunate and left him to make his way to the Shīʿī shrines of Iraq, where he lived out his life as a religious recluse.

But ʿAlī Mardān's own end was not far away. After the disastrous series of defeats that followed the triumph of Kirmānshāh, the Zand army split into several fugitive fragments. Spring of 1167/1754 found Muḥammad Khān and Shaikh ʿAlī Khān Zand in the Chamchamāl region of Kirmānshāh, where ʿAlī Mardān surprised them and took them to the enforced hospitality of his camp in a nearby gorge. Talks of an alliance with Karīm against the common enemy, Āzād, came to nothing, and the Zand khans realised that their only hope was to defeat the Bakhtiyārī leader before he defeated them. At a pre-arranged signal, they overpowered ʿAlī Mardān and his companions at their next interview, and Muḥammad Khān killed the Bakhtiyārī chief with his own dagger. The captives successfully ran the gauntlet of musketry from Ismāʿīl Khān's Lurs and eventually rejoined Karīm Khān with the welcome news that his earliest and most persistent rival was no more.[7]

Āzād Khān, a Ghilzai Afghan of Kabul who during the post-Nādir chaos had risen to somewhat precarious power in Āẕarbāījān, had in summer 1753 mistimed his junction with ʿAlī Mardān's royal army, and found himself in a position similar to that of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār one year before – numerically inferior against a triumphant Zand army. Like the Qājār chief, he chose discretion and retreated, pleading that he wished only to dissociate himself from ʿAlī Mardān now that he knew his pretender to have been an imposter. But Karīm insisted on nothing less than Āzād's surrender and tribute, which was rejected. Karīm's lieutenants reminded him of the *débâcle* against the Qājārs, but he was adamant, and attacked. His kinsmen's reluctance led to complete tactical confusion and precipitated the very disaster they had predicted; the Zands were routed and fled back to their fortress at Parī, where Shaikh ʿAlī Khān was left to organize the defence. Karīm, Ṣādiq and Iskandar Khān hurried to Iṣfahān, but found the town disaffected and, judging it indefensible, left for Shīrāz.

Āzād was not slow to exploit this sudden collapse of the Zand power. At Parī

[7] Gulistāna, pp. 292–9.

he tricked Shaikh ʿAlī and Muḥammad Khān into the open and seized them, together with fifteen others of Karīm's family who were in the fortress. The prisoners and booty were despatched under a strong escort to Urmīya, Āzād's northern base, while in October he secured undefended Iṣfahān and reduced the dependent towns to subjection, levying heavy contributions on all.[8]

Karīm had meanwhile been refused entry to Shīrāz by the governor, Hāshim Khān Bayāt, and was forced to turn about. With a few local reinforcements, he returned as far as Qumishah, which had recently been ravaged by Āzād's deputy, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Afshār. From here he mounted a series of guerrilla raids against Āzād's foragers and communications. An army under Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān advanced to exterminate this wasps' nest. After a spirited defence, during which the Vakīl's half-brother Iskandar was killed, the Zands were obliged to retreat south-westwards into the Kūhgīlūya mountains. They spent the rest of the winter in the Bakhtiyārī and Lurī hills, supported at Khurramābād by the Failī Lurs. Then the Zand's flagging morale was raised by the spectacular escape of the prisoners taken by Āzād at Qalʿa Parī: ably abetted by the Zand womenfolk, Muḥammad and Shaikh ʿAlī managed to slip their bonds and slay the escort leader, and rode to freedom in the ensuing confusion.[9] In the spring of 1167/1754, Āzād sent his re-equipped army under Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān to confront the new Zand force. This had badly lost cohesion during the severe winter, and by the time Karīm had fallen back on the Sīlākhūr region, near Burūjird, the last of his Lurī allies had slipped away. The Zand nucleus fought a fierce holding action to allow the women and baggage to escape, and won through to Chamchamāl with the loss of most of their flocks.

Here Muḥammad Khān separated from the others, and commenced a whole series of exploits with the murder of ʿAlī Mardān. He then set about recruiting tribal levies on the borders of the Zuhāb pāshālik and prepared to march on Kirmānshāh. Ḥaidar Khān of the Zangana prepared the ground by wresting Kirmānshāh from its enforced allegiance to Āzād, demolishing the defences and leading a general evacuation to join Muḥammad Khān at the frontier. From here the Zand Khān maintained an active threat to Āzād's communications with Urmīya, intercepting at least one treasure-convoy. He completed Ḥaidar Khān's work by blowing up the remains of the Kirmānshāh fortress and, in the winter of 1168/1754–55, stormed and destroyed the Tekkelū fortress of Valāshjird. Having cleared western ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam of Āzād's collaborators, he marched via Khūzistān to amass further plunder and join Karīm's army in Fārs.

[8] *Carmelite Chronicle* I, p. 658; Hovhanyants, *Patmutʿiwn Nor Jughayu*, p. 286.
[9] Gulistāna, pp. 279–83; Nāmī, p. 40.

Āzād had meanwhile marched into Shīrāz in August 1754 and the next month Fatḥ ʿAlī drove Karīm's small force out of Kāzarūn. He fell back on the strategic village of Khisht, near the pass of Kamārij, his last tenuous foothold on the Iranian plateau. Naṣīr Khān, his nominal vassal at Lār, had ignored his appeals for help, and the Zand nucleus was left with a few local allies such as Rustam Sulṭān, the headman of Khisht. A plan was evolved to lead Fatḥ ʿAlī into ambush in the narrow Kamārij pass: the Zands and the Dashtistānī musketeers lined up on the plain below, while Rustam Sulṭān and the musketeers of Khisht positioned themselves atop the hills flanking the defile. Like ʿAlī Mardān three years before, the Afshār were ambushed and routed. The survivors were pursued through Kāzarūn to Shīrāz, which Āzād had to evacuate ten days later. Agents opened the city to the besieging Zands, and on 13 Ṣafar 1168/29 November 1754, Karīm first entered his future capital of Shīrāz.[10]

Next spring, Muḥammad Khān Zand, who had now rejoined Karīm, defeated Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, and Āzād took steps to relinquish his precarious hold on Iṣfahān and retire northwards. While Karīm was consolidating his hold on Fārs and preparing to subjugate Naṣīr Khān of Lār, his Qājār rival Muḥammad Ḥasan was similarly reasserting his authority over Māzandarān and Gīlān, so that the Qājār domains were now adjacent to Āzād's territory; and when in November one of Āzād's generals was defeated by a Qājār force, the Afghan pulled out of Iṣfahān and retired to Kāshān. Karīm Khān heard of this on his way to raid Kirmān and, changing direction, retook Iṣfahān unopposed on 17 December 1755. Two days later he set off in pursuit and Āzād, caught between the Zand and Qājār forces, made all speed back to Urmīya early in 1756.[11]

But all was not well in the Zand camp. Karīm's varied commitments in Fārs, the Gulf coast, Yazd and Kirmān had dispersed his manpower; the bulk of his army at Iṣfahān now consisted of infantry, many of them Arabs, recruited from the Garmsīr and Dashtistān (the Gulf littoral). Disgruntled at the length of their service, the hardships of a particularly severe winter and their arrears of pay, they demanded their release. Karīm, fearing a confrontation with the Qājārs, refused. At this juncture an ultimatum arrived from Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān demanding that the Zand khān recognize Ismāʿīl Shāh, still in Qājār hands, and co-operate or be eliminated. This message, which only made Karīm more adamant in his refusal, caused a mutiny. Though this was quelled after a few days' fighting, the damage had been done; Iṣfahān, with an oppressed and

[10] See Malcolm, II, pp. 123–5; Kalāntar, pp. 49–56.

[11] *Gombroon Diary* VIII, 22 and 30 December 1755, 21 March 1756.

disgruntled populace and held by an unreliable garrison, was indefensible when the Qājār chief advanced. Shaikh ʿAlī and Muḥammad Khān Zand were sent to meet him and, on 27 March, at Kazzāz, between Qum and Kāshān, were heavily defeated. Muḥammad Khān was captured and sent to Māzandarān, where in 1758 he was killed after attempting to escape. Karīm Khān moved out with a few Zand veterans to Gulnābād, the site of the victory of the Ghilzai Afghans over the Safavids in 1722, and about the beginning of April 1756, was routed and fled to Shīrāz. The Qājārs then entered Iṣfahān unopposed.[12]

Late in June, Muḥammad Ḥasan marched on Shīrāz, but found it too well defended and, on news of an advance by Āzād, hurried back to defend Iṣfahān. However, he could not muster a large enough force to face the Afghan's reported 40,000, and withdrew via Kāshān and the Siyāh-Kūh route to Sārī. Āzād thus re-occupied Iṣfahān about mid-August of 1756. He then moved rapidly in pursuit of Muḥammad Ḥasan, but the Qājārs were fast enough to block the Alburz passes, and Āzād therefore swung round to Rasht in order to outflank them along the Caspian coastal route. Muḥammad Ḥasan in turn moved through Sārī to Āmul, and completely destroyed Āzād's advance lines at Rūdsar with a surprise cavalry-raid at night. Āzād, who had been preparing to winter at Rasht, found his elaborate exploratory front being rolled up in confusion by this bold stroke, and in February had to abandon Rasht in a precipitous retreat to Qazvīn. Muḥammad Ḥasan continued through Gīlān and Ṭālish as far as Astārā on the edge of the Mughān Steppe, then cut across Āẕarbāījān and laid siege to Āzād's base of Urmīya.[13]

Āzād marched from Iṣfahān on 15 April 1757, resolved on a decisive battle, and two months later was met by the Qājār's main force a short distance from Urmīya. Despite his superiority in numbers, Āzād was deserted at the height of the battle by Shahbāz Khān Dunbulī and other disaffected local khāns; the rest fled before the victorious Qājārs, who looted his baggage and returned to lay siege to Urmīya. The fortress capitulated within days, and with it went the loyalty of most of Āzād's former territory. Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Afshār was induced to join with the Qājārs, while Āzād fled to Baghdad.[14]

Karīm Khān had meanwhile engaged in a series of operations designed to secure the hinterland of Shīrāz, from the Kūhgīlū mountains across the Garmsīr to Khūzistān. His neglect of Iṣfahān enabled Muḥammad Ḥasan to return to the

[12] *Ibid.*, 31 March, 17 April 1756; Nāmī, p. 53.
[13] Butkov, *Materialy* I, 419–20; Ghifārī, *Gulshan-i Murād*, pp. 16–19.
[14] *Ibid*, pp. 19–24; Dunbulī, *Tajribat al-Aḥrār* II, pp. 20–1.

metropolis on 15 December 1757, after another lightning winter offensive, a double thrust via Burūjird and Hamadān. The famine-stricken city could barely support its own populace, let alone the large and restless army yet again forced upon it and, in March of the following year, Muḥammad Ḥasan set off to invest Shīrāz once more. As before, Naṣīr Khān Lārī was invited to join the Qājār chief, and a month later the complete force was encamped outside the Zand base. But Shīrāz had been well stocked with supplies and the remaining local resources destroyed; daily sorties and raids cut off men and mounts forcing the Qājārs to seek further afield for food and fodder, and in a few weeks the siege became an ironic copy of Karīm Khān's abortive assault on Astarābād six years previously, this time with the rôles reversed. One night in Shawwāl 1171/July 1758, the Afghan and Uzbek contingents, inherited mainly from Āzād, looted the Qājār camp and deserted in a body. The next day the depleted and dispirited Qājār army struck camp and fled north.

The over-extended Qājār commitment was now rolled rapidly back to its point of origin. Ḥusain Khān Develū of the rival Yūkhārī-bāsh branch of the Qājārs, who had held Iṣfahān for Muḥammad Ḥasan, relinquished the city and raced back towards Astarābād to secure it with his own men. Muḥammad Ḥasan's loyal governor of Māzandarān massacred most of the unreliable Afghans who had been allowed to settle around Sārī after Āzād's defeat; but even on reaching Tehran the Qājār chief was deserted by Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Afshār, Shahbāz Khān Dunbulī and other recently-acquired lieutenants. Qājār control had everywhere been eroded: Sārī was plundered by Yamūt Türkmen and fell to Shaikh ʿAlī Khān's pursuing Zands. Muḥammad Ḥasan, taking with him the puppet king and a few loyal retainers, fled to Astarābād, which despite Ḥusain Khān Develū had remained loyal to him.

In Muḥarram 1172/September 1758, the Vakīl and his army moved from Shīrāz to follow up Shaikh ʿAlī Khān and deliver the *coup de grâce*. He combined his slow advance with a review and reorganization of his realms in ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam, arriving at Tehran in December. Shaikh ʿAlī Khān, unable to breach the Qājār lines at Ashraf (present-day Bihshahr), boldly turned their right flank and made for their capital along the coast, which obliged Muḥammad Ḥasan to pull back hurriedly. An engagement at Kalbād drove the Qājārs into Astarābād, though Shaikh ʿAlī was unable immediately to follow up this success. Fearing betrayal by the Yūkhārī-bāsh potential traitors in his midst, Muḥammad Ḥasan had them massacred, then emerged again to bring Shaikh ʿAlī to battle before he could be extensively reinforced from Tehran. The resulting clash, on 15 Jumādā II 1172/ 14 February 1759, ended in a total Qājār defeat. Muḥammad Ḥasan was struck

down in flight by a Kurdish renegade from Qājār service, and Astarābād fell with enormous booty into Zand hands.[15]

Having recovered Ismāʿīl III, Karīm could once more legitimately style himself *vakīl* and reassert his authority with a grand traditional Naurūz celebration in Tehran. Āzād Khān was still at large in Iraq, and Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān and his allies controlled Urmīya; but the most immediate danger seemed to stem from the disaffected Afghan troops and their families in Māzandarān. The Qājār governor at Sārī had anticipated this with his massacre the previous year, and the Zand ruler resolved to rid himself of this superfluous and dangerously fickle minority at one blow. That same Naurūz, thousands of Afghans were massacred all over northern Iran – reputedly 9000 in Tehran alone – and those who escaped were hunted down and killed as far away as Yazd.

After spending the summer heat in the *yailāq* (summer quarter) of Shamīrān, and a second winter in Tehran, the Vakīl moved, in spring 1173/1760, on an aggressive reconnaissance of Āẕarbāījān. Marāgha was temporarily secured, but the lightly-equipped Zand army found Tabrīz too well-defended by Fatḥ ʿAlī and returned to Tehran before the summer. That autumn, the Vakīl and his full court took a long-needed rest on the pastures of Sulṭānīya and returned to Tehran in December to prepare a full-scale spring offensive.

He was anticipated in this by his old enemy Āzād who, since early 1758, had been planning to retake Tabrīz with the help of the Pasha of Baghdad. The Georgian king Heraclius (Erakli), under pressure from the expanding power of both Afshārs and Zands, encouraged him to return to Āẕarbāījān, but on his approach demurred at providing active aid; and Āzād's former lieutenants Fatḥ ʿAlī and Shāhbāz Khān, far from flocking to his standard, drove off his vanguard and prepared to defend their independent stake in the province. Probably in the summer of 1760, Āzād advanced on Tabrīz with a large and composite army and faced the coalition of Afshār and other Āẕarbāījān warlords at Marāgha. He was completely routed and fled to Kurdistān.[16] Failing to recruit further support either among the Kurds or from Sulaimān Pāshā, he and his household retinue made their way to a comfortable asylum at the Georgian court in Tiflis. Two years later, his last hope of glory gone with the Vakīl's conquest of Āẕarbāījān, he surrendered to Karīm and was kept as an honourable pensioner at Shīrāz for the rest of his life.

It is not clear why Karīm Khān was unable to take immediate advantage of these struggles for Āẕarbāījān. Probably his hold on Māzandarān and Gīlān –

[15] Ghifārī, pp. 43–50; Nāmī, pp. 83–8.
[16] *Ibid.*, pp. 68–72; Dunbulī, II, pp. 31–5.

which were to remain Qājār-dominated during the rest of his reign – was not secure enough to allow him to extend the Zand front. It was not until the summer of 1762, after prolonged confrontation at a distance, that the Vakīl advanced on Tabrīz. Near Qarā Chaman, some sixty miles south-east of Tabrīz, he was attacked by Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān's army, which at first seemed sure of victory. But the Zand forces, rallied by Karīm and Shaikh ʿAlī, swept the field; Shāhbāz Khān was captured and hastily transferred his allegiance to the Vakīl, while Fatḥ ʿAlī fled to Urmīya. Tabrīz opened its gates, and a few weeks later the Vakīl was besieging Urmīya. Spirited sorties by the garrison, hit-and-run raids by the local Kurds and a severe winter failed to dislodge the blockaders, and Urmīya fell seven months later, in Shaʿbān 1176/February 1763, the last fortress in western Iran to resist the Zands.

CONSOLIDATION OF THE CENTRE, 1763–6

With the collapse of Fatḥ ʿAlī's confederation, following so soon on that of the Qājārs, the Vakīl was for the first time master of all Iran, with the exception of the Afsharid state of Khurāsān. The large retinue that accompanied the Zand army, first on a tour of western Āẕarbāījān, then the following summer to Shīrāz, included a large number of new allies and hostages, among them Āzād and Fatḥ ʿAlī. The latter, who by all accounts lacked the generous qualities that made Āzād respected even by his enemies, was executed in Muḥarram 1178/July 1764 near Iṣfahān, probably on the instigation of ex-minions who now found themselves free to voice their detestation.[17]

Given Fatḥ ʿAlī's record of oppression and treachery, this action may be seen as an act of policy; as also may the massacre of the Afghans, in view of the still precarious victory recently enjoyed by the Zands and the fact that the Afghans were generally detested as a reminder of the worst days of Nādir Shāh's tyranny. But during this same period there were other executions and acts of cruelty which plainly embarrass the most devoted chroniclers and can only be regarded as a stain on the Vakīl's otherwise unblemished record of magnanimity and forbearance. It would seem that tensions had arisen in the Zand ranks which led to something approaching a purge. During Karīm's summer recreation in the Khamsa region in 1760, a Zand officer had been executed after a harem squabble involving the sister of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār, whom Karīm had

[17] Nāmī, p. 122.

recently married. During the siege of Urmīya, a plot was discovered to assassinate the Vakīl; some half-dozen conspirators, including the camp physician, were executed, and their heads flung at the foot of the city wall.

Soon after the siege the most palpable stain on the Vakīl's character occurred. Shaikh ʿAlī Khān had apparently shown himself so arrogant and independent as to constitute a threat to his cousin's authority; he is charged by the chroniclers with misappropriation of booty and provincial revenue, and with cruelty and extortion in dealing with conquered populations. Three of the clique he had cultivated in camp at Urmīya were executed on Karīm's orders. Shaikh ʿAlī, refusing to heed the signs, remonstrated so hotly with his cousin that the two came to blows and Karīm had him blinded. It can only be concluded that the Vakīl saw such arrogance and obstinacy from one who had hitherto been his close personal friend and most able lieutenant as a genuine threat to his rule, and as a dangerous crack in the united Zand front at a still critical period. Both seem to have been completely reconciled: Shaikh ʿAlī spent the rest of his life (until 1186/1772) as a respected member of the court, and never became a focus of sedition.

Several lesser Zand officers were dismissed or arrested at this time, including Sabz ʿAlī, a nephew of Shaikh ʿAlī Nadr Khān Zand, whose flight from the baggage-camp at Qarā Chaman had nearly cost the Zands that battle, died after a drunken debauch, possibly from poison.[18] Three Zand officers were blinded at Khūy some three months after Urmīya, and others were blinded and executed later at Iṣfahān. Then the purge stopped.

Another possible explanation for this spate of executions, besides that of policy, may be advanced. At Sīlākhūr, during the last weeks of 1763, Karīm was taken gravely ill. There were fears for his life, though he recovered within the month. No indication of the nature of his illness is given by the Persian chroniclers, but reports reaching the Carmelite community at Baṣra about this time assert that he had recently recovered from an abscess of the throat caused, it was said, by excessive addiction to opium. He had also taken to excessive drinking and meted out summary punishments to suspected miscreants while drunk.[19] Certainly both vices were common enough among rulers of the time, but this is the only period of his life when the Vakīl was noted to be dangerous in his cups. It may perhaps be conjectured that his impaired judgment and fits of vindictiveness – perhaps too his addiction to wine and opium – were the

[18] Ghifārī, p. 113. [19] *Carmelite Chronicle* I, pp. 663, 666.

reactions of a sick man under stress to a few genuine cases of disloyalty among men he had come to trust. Happily his temporary aberration never reached the fatal precipice of Nādir's madness.

Paradoxically, the only irrefutable case of real and sustained rebellion at this time was treated by Karīm with consistent moderation and clemency. His cousin and half-brother Zakī, as his conduct on the Vakīl's death was to show, was a cruel and selfish opportunist. Piqued by a fancied lack of recognition of his rôle in the battle of Qarā Chaman, he and his adherents had retired to Tehran, where he plundered Shaikh ʿAlī's baggage, and continued to Iṣfahān. Here his Bakhtiyārī supporters tricked ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān Zand, then governor of Burūjird, into renouncing his allegiance to the Vakīl and joining Zakī to exploit the long-suffering populace of Iṣfahān. They then launched an abortive attack on Kāshān. Karīm forbore at first to interfere, but by Rabīʿ II, 1177/October 1763 he realized that the whole centre of his realm was likely to crumble under the shocks of this irresponsible adventure. He advanced from Ardabīl to the relief of Kāshān and Iṣfahān, and Zakī Khān, together with his family, Bakhtiyārī adherents and a collection of hostages from the families of loyal Zands in Iṣfahān, fled through the Bakhtiyārī mountains to Khūzistān. He lost his baggage and hostages to the pursuing Naẓar ʿAlī Kān Zand on the western edge of the Zarda Kūh foothills and, his resources greatly depleted, sought the help of Maulā Muṭṭalib, the chief of the Shīʿī Mushaʿshaʿ Arabs, who was then Vālī of ʿArabistān.

The Vālī found it convenient to use Zakī's forces as an arm of his advance on rebel-held Dizfūl. Zakī, however, recruited reinforcements from the Āl-Kathīr tribe, then waging a blood-feud against the Vālī and, under their influence, secured the adherence of the Governor of Dizfūl in a threefold alliance against the Vālī. Zakī then sent a force under ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān which killed Maulā Muṭṭalib's family and captured him alive. Anxious to avoid the clutches of his blood-enemies the Āl-Kathīr, the Vālī paid Zakī a ransom of 60,000 tūmāns; but no sooner was this accepted than Zakī found it expedient to hand over his prisoner to the now dominant Āl-Kathīr, who promptly killed him.[20] The Āl-Kathīr had no further use for their Zand ally, and the remaining Mushaʿshaʿ became bitterly hostile, so Zakī Khān was obliged to lead his few remaining Bakhtiyārī and Lurī adherents back into the mountains. Here, early in 1764, he was intercepted by Naẓar ʿAlī Khān and threw himself on the Vakīl's clemency. Both he and ʿAlī Muḥammad were granted a full pardon.

[20] Ghifārī, pp. 128–37; cf. Kasravī, *Tārīkh-i Pānṣad-sāla-yi Khūzistān*, pp. 153–5.

Thus ended an episode which might have split the Zand empire irreparably had Zakī Khān been anywhere near as diplomatic in dealing with his allies as was the Vakīl. The revolt had acted as a barometer, indicating the latent disaffection of various tribal elements in the Zand confederation and on its fringes, which Karīm now took steps to remedy. The Bakhtiyārī, still conscious of their jealously maintained status under the Safavids and Nādir Shāh and having come near to attaining power under ʿAlī Mardān, now tasted the Vakīl's displeasure. Having retaken Iṣfahān and restored his authority there by early 1764, Karīm sent forces into the Zarda Kūh to round up and disarm as many Bakhtiyārī tribesmen as possible. Three thousand of their fighting men were incorporated into the Zand army and the rest forcibly resettled, the Haft Lang around Qum and Varāmīn, some two hundred miles to the north, and the Chahār Lang near Fasā in Fārs, three hundred miles south-east of their ancestral lands.[21] Next their northern neighbours, the Failī Lurs, whose nominal submission to the Vakīl had likewise been sloughed off during Zakī's revolt, were chastised: in the winter of 1764–5 the Zands struck at Khurramābād, plundering Ismāʿīl Khān's possessions and forcing him to flee to the Iraqi plains and the hospitality of the Banū Lām. Karīm dealt out no further punishment to the Lurī tribesmen, merely replacing Ismāʿīl as paramount chief by his more compliant brother. Whereas the Bakhtiyārī seem to have been cowed for the rest of the Vakīl's reign, his attempts to subjugate the Failī Lurs were less successful: soon after this Ismāʿīl Khān returned to power and retained his influence for the rest of the Zand period.

Finally, the Zand army moved into northern Khūzistān, preceded by a detachment under Naẓar ʿAlī Khān which pursued the Banū Lām and plundered a group of Āl-Kathīr tribesmen. During the few days the Vakīl spent at Dizfūl and Shūshtar – where he celebrated Naurūz of 1178/1765 – he made several new government appointments and extracted 20,000 tumans in reparations and presents from the recalcitrant province. In May he returned to Shīrāz through the Kūhgīlūya mountains, where other rebel strongholds remained to be breached.

Ever since Karīm had been driven back on Kāzarūn by Azād in 1754, this mountainous area to the north-west of Shīrāz had come to form the strategic left flank of the new Zand heartland of Fārs, guarding the routes to Khūzistān and Luristān. His first campaign here was undertaken in 1757, while Āzād and Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān were struggling for supremacy in the north. Bihbahān,

[21] See Fasāʾī, *Fārsnāma-yi Nāṣirī* I, pp. 214–15.

the central stronghold of the independent mountaineers, was blockaded, stormed and sacked, and Jāyizān fell after a gruelling eight-month siege stretching over the summer. While the Vakīl was in Āẕarbāījān in 1760, one of the two officials he had appointed to govern the Kūhgīlūya rebelled with the support of the local tribes. Though he was dismissed and captured, the mountaineers maintained their independence until the spring of 1178/1765, when all paid homage to the Vakīl on his return from Khūzistān, with the exception of the Lurī tribe of the Līravī centred on two fortresses near Bihbahān. The Zand advance met with desperate resistance all around these strongholds, which fell after appalling casualties on both sides. No quarter was asked or given; prisoners were beheaded and a tower of skulls built as a warning to others. The excessive savagery of this treatment would have gone unnoticed in Nādir's day, but as the action of the normally moderate Vakīl it calls forth a somewhat anxious justification from the chronicler Mīrzā Ṣādiq Nāmī:[22] the unrepentant brigands had put up a fierce fight and an example was necessary in this strategic area.

On 2 Ṣafar 1179/21 July 1765, after an absence of almost seven years, the Vakīl entered his capital and was not to leave again for the remaining fourteen years of his reign. Only now could he give thought to securing his strategic right wing, the large and mountainous province of Lār.

Naṣīr Khān had risen by a process of organized brigandage in the period of the Afghan invasion and Nādir Shāh's reign to gain undisputed control of Lār and its dependencies, the Sabᶜa region bordering on Kirmān and the Gulf littoral. Nādir Shāh had been content to confirm his *de facto* dominion. He had failed to take Shīrāz during the interregnum, but from 1751, with a strong standing army, asserted his authority over the port of Bandar ᶜAbbās and the trade routes inland. He had been wooed with further diplomas and titles by Āzād, Muḥammad Ḥasan and Karīm Khān, and had indeed aided the Qājār chief in his abortive siege of Shīrāz in 1758. Karīm's first campaign in Lār, in 1755, was a two-pronged advance on the city of Lār itself, which however held out; Naṣīr Khān agreed to pay tribute and a truce was reached. Over the next three years, the Zands kept up intermittent pressure on Naṣīr Khān, who was also involved in border hostilities with Shāhrukh Khān, governor of Kirmān.

When Karīm Khān set off in pursuit of the Qājārs in 1758, he detailed a force to chastise Naṣīr Khān which had some success, but made no attempt to take the stronghold of Lār itself. While Ṣādiq Khān governed Shīrāz, the Khān of Lār continued his depredations unchecked, and in 1760 even forced a truce by the

[22] Pp. 128–9.

terms of which his autonomy was recognized for a small tribute and hostages were exchanged. Early in 1179/1766, however, Karīm despatched Ṣādiq to reduce the fortress. The town of Lār fell quickly, and a deserter showed the Zands a secret track up the rocks on top of which was Naṣīr Khān's fortress. Naṣīr Khān nevertheless fought on until, with supplies running low, his men mutinied and he was forced to sue for terms. His stronghold was demolished and he and his family were taken back to Shīrāz, where they were generously treated as hostage-guests. The inhabitants of Lār were not subjected to reprisals, and Masīḥ Khān, a cousin of Naṣīr Khān, was appointed to govern in his stead, which he did loyally for the rest of Karīm's reign.[23]

CENTRIFUGAL REGIONS, 1758–77

The provincial centres which lay even further away from Shīrāz showed a proportionately greater determination to live a life of their own at the outset of the Zand regency. At the end of Nādir's reign, Kirmān was seized by an Afshār, Shāhrukh Khān, whose family had held the province more or less continuously since the time of Shāh ʿAbbās. He added Yazd and Abarqūh to his domains and paid nominal homage but no taxes to the Afsharid rulers in Mashhad. In 1754, he appealed to Naṣīr Khān Lārī for help against repeated raids by a former governor of Kirmān, Muʾmin Khān Bāfqī. Naṣīr Khān marched with 8000 men ostensibly to join him, but on meeting Shāhrukh Khān near Mashīz he bound him hand and foot and sent to Kirmān for a ransom. This was refused and he advanced to besiege the city. But he was hotly resisted, and when Shāhrukh Khān managed to bribe his guards and escape, the Khān of Lār beat a disgruntled retreat.

Meanwhile Yazd, traditionally dependent on Iṣfahān, broke free under Taqī Khān Bāfqī, a local chieftain who had profited from the rivalries of Āzād, Muḥammad Ḥasan and Karīm Khān to become self-styled governor. On his way north in 1758, the Vakīl sent a flying column under Zakī Zand to bring Taqī Khān to book. The "governor" was dragged straight from his bed to the rack, and before Karīm arrived with the main body of the army had already disgorged 12,000 tūmāns. At a further court hearing, all his creditors were brought forward to testify to his oppression and were duly reimbursed. Taqī Khān was mulcted and dismissed, and the Zand army moved on. In 1760, while the Vakīl was in Tehran, Shāhrukh Khān once more took possession of Yazd. Karīm

[23] *Ibid.*, pp. 149–50.

therefore despatched Khudā Murād Khān Zand to impose his authority on the whole of Kirmān province. Shortly before the arrival of the Zand army, Shāhrukh Khān was killed in a popular insurrection, but his successors at first refused to admit Khudā Murād to Kirmān. He negotiated an entry on terms, which once inside he ignored and subjected the city to even greater oppression than had Shāhrukh Khān. A bare six months later, in Ramażān 1174/March 1761, he was deposed and killed by a victim of his injustice, one Taqī Khān from the village of Durrān, who, with a small force of musketeers from his native village, scaled the city wall one night and seized control.

Like that of previous governors, his reign began in a wave of relative popularity and military expansion; but Kirmān soon relapsed into the civil turmoil and economic stagnation with which successive predators had familiarized it. Late in 1762 Taqī Khān Bāfqī, who was with the Vakīl's army in Āẕarbāījān, begged the chance to redeem himself by an attack on his namesake in Kirmān. His advance guard was roughly handled by the Durrānī musketeers, and he turned tail without further engagement. Another expedition about 1764 almost foundered on the jealousy of its joint commanders, a Kurd, Muḥammad Khān Garrūsī, and an Afshār, Amīr Gūna Khān Ṭārumī. Garrūsī was fortunate to reach Kirmān at a time when Taqī Khān was absent, and took advantage of mutinous elements within to seize the city. But he was unable to extend his authority outside, and two months later had to flee when Ṭaqī Khān mounted a successful night raid and recaptured Kirmān. In a second advance on Kirmān soon after this, the Kurdish khan was routed in the field and again retired to Shīrāz.

For his fifth attempt to hold this stubborn province, the Vakīl commissioned the veteran ʿAlī Khān Shāhiseven, who methodically drove Taqī Khān back on his capital and invested it determinedly. But during a skirmish outside the walls, he was shot dead by a sniper and his army trudged back to Shīrāz. Outside Kirmān, the invincible Taqī Khān was becoming a legend and a mockery of Karīm Khān's pretensions to be regent of Iran. ʿAlī Khān's army was sent back to the attack under Naẓar ʿAlī Khān. By judicious propaganda and generous treatment of defectors he encouraged desertions by many who were disillusioned with the extortionate sway of Taqī Khān. By about spring of 1766, supplies had dwindled in the blockaded city and popular disaffection increased to such a degree that Taqī Khān was seized and the gates thrown open to the Zands. He was taken to Shīrāz and put to death.[24] From then on Kirmān and its

[24] Ghifārī, pp. 145–8. For the most detailed account of Kirmān during this period, see Vazīrī, *Tārīkh-i Kirmān*, p. 316ff.

dependencies remained securely in the Vakīl's hands, though the rivalries of the various local governors did little to restore its prosperity. Eventually, Karīm Khān appointed as *beglerbegī* an Ismāʿīlī sayyid, Abuʾl-Ḥasan ʿAlī Shāh Maḥallātī, well respected locally for his piety and generosity. His moral authority overrode the petty squabbles of the regional military governors, and his ample private income precluded any necessity for extortion or peculation; Kirmān was thus governed wisely and well for the rest of the Vakīl's reign.

The provinces of Astarābād (Gurgān), Māzandarān and Gīlān never wholly submitted to Zand rule, remaining a centre of Qājār power and intermittent revolt from Nādir's time up to Āghā Muḥammad's final overthrow of the Zands in 1795. Karīm Khān was aware of the magnitude of this problem and attempted to reduce it by appeasement, by dividing the Qājārs among themselves and by taking hostages, but without great success. On his death in 1759, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān left nine sons, most of whom fled from Astarābād to the traditional Qājār refuge, the Türkmen of the Dasht-i Qipchāq (the northern steppe). From here they took to raiding the governor, Ḥusain Khān Develū, appointed by the Zand, who was of the rival Yūkhārī-bāsh clan. But Muḥammad Ḥasan's eldest son Āghā Muḥammad Khān, then aged about eighteen, was captured in Māzandarān and sent to Tehran, where Karīm treated him with exceptional kindness and urged him to persuade the remaining fugitives to give themselves up. This they did, and were settled on the family estates; the elder princes, including Āghā Muḥammad and Ḥusain Qulī Khān, were taken as hostages to Shīrāz, where they were treated with Karīm's customary kindness. Muḥammad Ḥasan's sister, Khadīja Bīgum, was likewise taken to Shīrāz as the Vakīl's wife.

This wise policy was unfortunately prejudiced by the immediate military pacification of the Qājār realms, undertaken by Zakī Khān with unnecessary cruelty. But the greatest risk the Vakīl took in attempting to tame these provinces was in later appointing Muḥammad Ḥasan's second son, the twenty-year old Ḥusain Qulī, to govern Dāmghān. With Āghā Muḥammad a hostage in Shīrāz and a eunuch (he had been castrated by ʿĀdil Shāh in 1748),[25] Ḥusain Qulī Khān was the heir apparent and guarantor of the posterity of the Ashāqa-bāsh clan of the Qājārs. Perhaps, as the Qājār historians claim, the Vakīl was persuaded by Āghā Muḥammad – for whose political sagacity he had a genuine respect – that this was the best way to retain full control of Māzandarān.[26] At any

[25] Marʿashī, *Majmaʿ al-tavārīkh*, p. 98.

[26] Riżā Qulī Khān Hidāyat, *Rauẓat al-Ṣafā-yi Nāṣirī*, IX, p. 86. With allowance made for obvious partisanship, this is the most detailed and reliable source for events in the north-east of the Zand realms.

rate, the youth's first action on taking up his appointment in Shawwāl 1182/ February 1769 was to marry the daughter of a Qājār noble, from which union was born in the following year the future Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh. Over the course of the next eight years Ḥusain Qulī recruited and organized a powerful following of Ashāqa-bāsh and their clients and, by intimidation backed by open warfare where necessary, neutralized the power of the Yūkhārī-bāsh who were subsidized by the Zand. He was careful to keep within the bounds of the traditional Qājār clan feud and could never be proved to have rebelled openly against the Vakīl; with the result that Karīm refrained from exerting pressure on his hostages and was content to send three small expeditionary forces to replace or restore the Yūkhārī-bāsh khans and exact apologies and contrite promises from the young Qājār.

His savage destruction of the Develū stronghold of Qalʿa Namaka earned for him the sobriquet of Jahānsūz Shāh ("World-burner"), and brought a punitive force of Lurī and Kurdish cavalry under Zakī Khān. Ḥusain Qulī prudently withdrew to the Türkmen steppes, but when Zakī's force retired he came out of hiding and killed Ḥasan Khān, the ex-governor of Astarābād who had recently relinquished his post in fear of attack. Fearing for his own position, Muḥammad Khān Savādkūhī, governor of Māzandarān, called for Zand reinforcements and marched on Astarābād. Ḥusain Qulī bypassed him, seized his capital of Sārī, defeated him in the field, tortured and killed him. His son Mahdī Khān escaped to Shīrāz, and returned with a Zand army to exact vengeance; again the Qājār took refuge on the steppes, only to return and defeat Mahdī Khān at Bārfurūsh after the Zands had withdrawn. Finally, in 1190/1776, Zakī Khān returned to Māzandarān and restored order with a brutality long remembered. All Ḥusain Qulī's supporters were so relentlessly persecuted that by the time Zakī left for Shīrāz even the Qājār's Türkmen allies had begun to desert him. He massacred a band of Türkmen raiders who had attacked one of his few remaining allies, then soon after a last abortive assault on Astarābād, about 1191/1777, he was murdered by a band of Türkmen as he lay asleep in the open. Though the Vakīl condoled most sympathetically with Āghā Muḥammad, he can hardly have been other than greatly relieved.

THE PERSIAN GULF

During the greater part of this period the Zand ruler was more actively occupied with affairs on the Persian Gulf. The Iranian littoral of the Gulf, from the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab to the Strait of Hurmuz, was dominated by a series of petty

Arab shaikhs and their often intractable subjects. For the most part Sunnī Muslims, they remained aloof from their Iranian neighbours, and paid tribute to inland rulers only when these could afford to send armed expeditions to enforce it; even then, they would often escape temporarily to the offshore islands. Their nominal occupations of fishing, pearling and trading were supplemented by booty from raids on their rivals by land and sea. Their counterparts on the Arabian shore included the Qawāsim (or Jawāsim) of Julfār, who from 1760 began to infiltrate Qishm Island and the inland regions near Bandar ʿAbbās.

This port, developed by Shāh ʿAbbās to serve Kirmān and Iṣfahān, had already lost much of its importance through Nādir's transfer of the capital to Mashhad, and during the anarchy of the interregnum was a centre only of continuous strife as the governor Maulā ʿAlī Shāh, Naṣīr Khān Lārī, the local Banū Maʿīn Arabs and the invading Qawāsim struggled for the rights to salvage the sorry remains of Nādir's navy, plunder the dwindling merchant traffic and blackmail the British and Dutch trading posts. Even after Karīm Khān had established himself at Shīrāz, his access to this region was at first blocked by the hostile Naṣīr Khān; and by the time this menace was neutralized, Shīrāz's natural port of Būshahr (Bushire) had risen to replace Bandar ʿAbbās as Iran's first trading centre. This process was confirmed when first the Dutch in 1759, then the British East India Company in 1765, moved their bases from Bandar ʿAbbās in the lower Gulf and resettled respectively on Khārg Island and at Būshahr, in the upper Gulf.

Karīm Khān's contemporary at Būshahr was Shaikh Nāṣir, who combined his small army and fleet in 1753 to capture the Baḥrain archipelago. He was imprisoned by the Vakīl two years later, but on release remained a loyal vassal of the Zands until his death in 1783. Some forty miles north-west of Būshahr ruled his rival and occasional ally Mīr Naṣīr Vaghāʾī of Bandar Rīg, whose jurisdiction included the offshore island of Khārg.

In 1753, Baron Kniphausen, former director of the Dutch agency at Baṣra who had been imprisoned, fined and expelled by the Ottoman governor on various trumped-up charges, returned from Batavia with three ships and occupied the island of Khārg. From here, he so successfully blockaded the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab that the governor refunded his "fine" and in vain begged him to return to Baṣra. Kniphausen proceeded to turn Khārg into a flourishing Dutch colony with a stout fort and a village, attracting Armenian merchants from the mainland and the staff of the declining settlement at Bandar ʿAbbās.

The terms by which the Dutch held Khārg were now called in question. According to the Baron and his successors, Mīr Naṣīr of Bandar Rīg had freely

ceded the island to them, while Mīr Nasīr's energetic adolescent son Mīr Muhannā maintained that they owed a heavy rent.[27] With the pretext of his father's inability to press this claim, Muhannā killed both his parents and, by 1755, had taken control of Bandar Rīg. His elder brother Ḥusain returned from Baḥrain, but at the same time Karīm Khān suddenly descended on Bandar Rīg and detained both brothers at Shīrāz for a year. When they returned in 1756, apparently reconciled, a British agency had been established at the port; but this was hastily abandoned when Mīr Muhannā killed his brother and fifteen other relatives and recovered complete control of Bandar Rīg. Over the next few years Mīr Muhannā's notoriety spread throughout the Gulf. The Vakīl arrested him again in 1758, but reinstated him on the intercession of an influential relative of the pirate; and when, in 1765, Karīm sent a demand for tribute backed by a force under Amīr Gūna Khān Afshār, Mīr Muhannā embarked his men and livestock on boats and set off to Khārgū, a small island next to Khārg. The Vakīl is said also to have demanded tribute from the Dutch on Khārg, who likewise refused.[28] With both Shaikh Nāṣir of Būshahr and the British reluctant to render naval aid, the Zand army was left helpless on the shore.

Finally the East India Company's vessel and Shaikh Nāṣir's flotilla sailed diffidently into the attack, and for the next five weeks Mīr Muhannā's fleet ran rings round them, and continued to prey on merchant shipping from its Khārgū base. A Dutch expedition from Khārg was routed, and the pirate quickly followed up this advantage by landing in force on Khārg itself. On New Year's Day 1766 the director, Van Houting, was tricked into leaving his fort to negotiate, whereupon he and his staff were seized and bundled into boats for Būshahr, there to await passage back to Batavia. By this coup, Mīr Muhannā secured the strongest fort and richest warehouse in the Gulf; he had likewise regained control of Baḥrain, and when the frustrated Zand army withdrew from Bandar Rīg the Vaghāʾī chief reoccupied his original base as well.

A further Zand expedition under Zakī Khān failed even to take Bandar Rīg. The East India Company attacked Khārg independently and were beaten off with loss, after which Mīr Muhannā in reprisal captured a British merchantman, the *Speedwell*, as she sailed up the Gulf. No co-ordination was achieved between the Company and the Zands, despite protracted talks; but, by 1768, definite pressure was exerted on Khārgū through a joint blockade by Zakī's army at Bandar Rīg and Shaikh Nāṣir's fleet. Hardship robbed Mīr Muhannā of support,

[27] Records of the Dutch East India Company: *Brieven overgekomen*, 2756 (1756), Khārg, foll. 5–6; 2777 (1757), Khārg pt. III, foll. 15–19. For a detailed account of this episode see Perry, "Mīr Muhannā and the Dutch." [28] Niebuhr, *Reisebeschreibungen* II, pp. 183–4.

and early in 1769 he was surprised by a revolt of some of his kinsmen and only just escaped with his bodyguard in a small open boat. The island submitted to the Zands, and the Vakīl showed his usual statesmanship in forgoing all reprisals, distributing Mīr Muhannā's property among the rebels and appointing their leader, Ḥasan Sulṭān, to govern Bandar Rīg. Mīr Muhannā had meanwhile landed near Baṣra, where he was captured by the governor's men and executed. Khārg slipped back into the poverty and obscurity of the days before the Dutch, who never returned to the Gulf; and Bandar Rīg, its defences demolished and the independent Vaghāʾī spirit crushed, was henceforth completely overshadowed by Būshahr.

Karīm's attempts to control the lower Gulf at this later period were rather less successful. In 1769, he sent a demand to the Imām of Oman for tribute on the same terms as had been imposed by Nādir, and for the return of Nādir's ship the *Raḥmānī* which the Imām had bought from the Banū Maʿīn without the Vakīl's consent. These demands were contemptuously rejected, and an intermittent state of war, manifested in isolated acts of piracy, subsisted between Iran and Oman for most of the Zand period. Having won some measure of control over the Bandar ʿAbbās region, Karīm in 1187/1773 sent a force under Zakī Khān to mount a seaborne invasion of Oman. Shaikh ʿAbd-Allāh of the Banū Maʿīn – the real power in the region, whose son was then a hostage in Shīrāz – promised every support but, on Zakī's arrival, lured him to Hurmuz Island with the promise of his beautiful daughter's hand in marriage, and then imprisoned him. The Zand army awaited his return to the mainland in vain, and finally dispersed; the Vakīl was obliged to comply with the Shaikh's suggestion of a reciprocal return of hostages, and ʿAbd-Allāh's son was sent from Shīrāz while a chastened Zakī returned in disgrace.[29] So ended the Vakīl's first attempt to emulate Nādir Shāh by foreign conquest.

The largest and best organized of the "pirate" states which the Vakīl set himself to subdue was that of the Banū Kaʿb of Khūzistān.[30] From the late sixteenth century, they had moved from lower Iraq to settle at Qubān on the Khaur Mūsā inlet, and later at Dauraq on the Jarāḥī river. After Nādir's death their great Shaikh Salmān rebuilt this centre as his capital and renamed it Fallāḥīya. He rapidly expanded his realms along the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab to comprise a triangular empire of about one hundred miles a side, embracing both Iranian and Ottoman territory. In 1758 he laid down the nucleus of a navy which soon outstripped that of the *qaputān pāshā* of Baṣra. His amphibious forces could raid

[29] Nāmī, pp. 176–8; East India Company, *Factory Records* XVII, 1071 (18 May 1774).
[30] For a detailed account of these operations, see Perry, "The Banū Kaʿb."

date-groves and caravan routes and blockade the Shaṭṭ at will, and when pursued by the forces of either the Pasha or the Vakīl would disappear into their marshland fastnesses and evade or buy off their frustrated pursuers.

Karīm Khān mounted punitive campaigns of limited success in 1170/1757 and 1178/1765, for the second of which he had been promised assistance by ʿUmar Pāshā of Baghdad. A truly international project was evolved for combined operations against this brigand state, whereby Ottoman troops and the East India Company's gunboats were to drive the Kaʿb inland from the Shaṭṭ while the Zand army intercepted them from the north-east. But though Karīm reached Fallāḥīya, the boats and supplies promised by the Pasha never materialized. By dint of destroying Kaʿb property, the Vakīl elicited tribute from Shaikh Salmān and marched home, after delivering a strong protest to the Pasha. The Kaʿb, after playing cat-and-mouse with the clumsy and ill co-ordinated Baṣran navy, likewise bought a truce with the Turks. The British at Baṣra, who omitted to have themselves included in this treaty, lost three ships to the Kaʿb and unwisely launched their own amphibious offensive with reinforcements from Bombay; they suffered heavy casualties and withdrew to patrol the Shaṭṭ. All remaining Turkish and British pressure on the Kaʿb was then removed when Shaikh Salmān induced the Vakīl, by means of expensive presents, to serve both the Pasha and the Company's agent with an ultimatum to withdraw from Iranian territory and cease molesting his "subjects" the Kaʿb.

Kaʿb fortunes declined rapidly with the death of Shaikh Salmān in 1768, after thirty-one years of independent tussling with the three greatest powers in the Gulf. His successors readily co-operated with the Vakīl seven years later in his conquest of Baṣra. Only with the taming of the shaikhs of the Gulf ports and the Kaʿb was the Zand leader ready for this last and most ambitious target, which had eluded both Shāh ʿAbbās and Nādir Shāh.

WAR WITH THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE, 1774–79

Karīm's war with the Turks was fought simultaneously on two fronts – the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab, and the Kurdish provinces of Bābān and Ẕuhāb, from where Baghdad itself could be threatened. The major political cause of the war was ʿUmar Pāshā's intervention in the rivalries for the frontier province of Bābān (approximately present-day Sulaimānīya in Iraq), which, since the death of Sulaimān Pāshā of Baghdad in 1762, had fallen increasingly under the influence of the Zand-sponsored viceroy (*vālī*) of Ardalān (equivalent to the present *ustān* of Kurdistān). ʿUmar's replacement of the Bābān ruler in 1774 provoked two

campaigns by the Zands to restore Iranian influence in the area. This sudden hardening of the Pasha's hitherto *laissez-faire* attitude was further manifested in his imposition of a frontier toll on Iranian pilgrims to the shrines of Najaf and Karbalā, and in his confiscation of the residue of Persian pilgrims and residents who died during the epidemic that devastated Iraq during 1772–73. Demands for redress and for fair treatment of pilgrims, in accordance with Nādir's treaty of 1746, brought no response.[31]

With the loss of Mashhad, free access to the shrines of Iraq was more important to the Zand leader than it had been to the Safavids or the Afsharids, and the Pasha's policy was enough to justify a Shīʿī *jihād*. Other motives were the need to employ a standing army prone to restlessness, and to recoup prestige after Zakī's embarrassing misadventures on Hurmuz; to chastise the Pasha and his *mutasallim* (governor) of Baṣra for their connivance at Kaʿb depredations and for alleged assistance of the Omani enemy; and above all the commercial prize of Baṣra itself. In recent years, the Iraqi port had perceptibly overtaken its rival Būshahr which, in 1769, had been abandoned by the East India Company in favour of Baṣra. Factors favouring the Zands were the weakness and disorganization of both Baghdad and Baṣra after the recent epidemic, and the inability of the Sublime Porte, chastened after its defeat by Russia in 1774, to render direct assistance to its near-autonomous eastern province.

While ʿAlī Murād and Naẓar ʿAlī Khān Zand kept the Pasha's forces occupied in Kurdistān with a few thousand men, Ṣādiq Khān marched with some 30,000 men to commence the siege of Baṣra in Ṣafar 1189/April 1775. The Mutasallim's Muntafiq Arab allies retired without attempting to deny Ṣādiq passage of the Shaṭṭ, and boats provided and crewed by the Kaʿb and the Arabs of Būshahr secured the Iranian army's transport and supplies. The garrison under the energetic Sulaimān Āqā defended the town with spirit, and Ṣādiq was forced to entrench for a blockade lasting over a year. The Company resident, Henry Moore, after attacking some of the besiegers' supply boats and providing a chain boom to block the Shaṭṭ below Baṣra, slipped anchor and left for Būshahr and Bombay at the start of the siege. In October, a fleet from Oman broke through the boom to land supplies and reinforcements, which greatly raised Baṣran morale; but their united sortie the following day appears to have been indecisive. The Omani fleet was thus confined to its anchorage under constant fire, and that winter the Imām decided to cut his losses and sailed back to Muscat.

[31] The accounts of this war and its causes in the Persian chronicles (Nāmī, p. 181ff.; Ghifārī, pp. 176–7, 180ff.) are substantially confirmed by Ottoman sources (e.g. *Hatt-i Hümayun* I, nos. 2, 174, 202, 218, 219; Jaudat (Cevdet), *Tārīkh* II, pp. 55ff.)

A relief force from Baghdad was defeated by Ṣādiq's Shīʿī Arab allies, the Khazāʿil, and, by the spring of 1776, the tightened blockade had brought the defenders to the verge of starvation. Mass defections and the threat of mutiny drove Sulaimān Āqā to capitulate on 26 Ṣafar 1190/16 April 1776.

Ottoman reactions to these events on the eastern frontiers were surprisingly slow, even granted the death of the capable Sulṭān Muṣṭafā III and his succession by the weak ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd late in 1773, and the subsequent Russian misadventure. An Ottoman envoy, Vehbī Efendī, was despatched to Shīrāz in February of 1775, when the Kurdish front was momentarily quiet and before news of the impending siege of Baṣra had reached Istanbul. He arrived in Shīrāz, ironically, about the same time that Ṣādiq reached Baṣra, but was not empowered to negotiate over this new crisis.[32] By the time he returned to the Porte, bearing the conventional compliments and detailed complaints against ʿUmar Pāshā, Baṣra had fallen. Some months later the Porte dismissed ʿUmar on charges of provoking a needless war, enforcing this decision with an army under the Pasha of Raqqa; but this attempt to subject Baghdad directly to Istanbul misfired, for ʿUmar's former lieutenant ʿAbd-Allāh soon took over the pashalik. It was not until about May 1776 that the Porte had a *fatvā* issued declaring war on the Vakīl and forces were levied for a campaign on the Kurdish front. At Marīvān in Rabīʿ I 1191/May 1777 Khusrau Khān, the Vālī of Ardalān, was heavily defeated by the reinforced Pasha of Bābān; but some months later a three-pronged Zand invasion of Kurdistān restored the *status quo* with a rout of the Turkish-Bābān forces on the plain of Shahrazur, and ʿAbd-Allāh Pāshā initiated peace negotiations.

In Baṣra, meanwhile, a heavy indemnity was extorted and hostages, including Sulaimān Āqā, were sent to Shīrāz. But there was no prescription and Ṣādiq seems in general to have respected the terms of capitulation. Only when he returned to Shīrāz later in the year, leaving ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān to administer the city and region, did the occupation degenerate into a chaos of unrestrained greed and senseless slaughter. Extortion increased to the verge of outright looting and women were abducted for the pleasure of the commandant and his officers. Having squeezed the town dry, ʿAlī Muḥammad turned his attention to the countryside: he plundered and burned down the town of al-Zubair and repeatedly robbed the Muntafiq Arabs despite a pledge of safe conduct. In June 1778, the Muntafiq retaliated by routing one of his raiding parties and, in September, ʿAlī Muḥammad set out with a large force to teach them a lesson.

[32] State Papers, SP 97/51 (Turkey), fol. 21a; cf. Ghifārī, p. 190.

The Arabs led him into a trap between the Euphrates and a swamp, and massacred him and his army almost to a man.

Vengeance satisfied, the Muntafiq made no attempt to follow up this resounding success by retaking Baṣra, and the garrison was able to sit tight until Ṣādiq Khān hastened back with reinforcements in December. Bled of all wealth, depopulated by plague, siege and occupation, Baṣra was already more of a liability than an asset to the Zands; from now on it lost its commercial importance both as a terminus of the caraven route to Aleppo and as a port, and was no longer of use even as a bargaining-point in negotiations with Baghdad, since these had collapsed with the recent death of ʿAbd-Allāh Pāshā and a renewal of internecine anarchy in the pashalik. Ṣādiq was already preparing to withdraw when he received the not unexpected news of the Vakīl's death on 13 Ṣafar 1193/1 March 1779.

KARĪM KHĀN'S SUCCESSORS 1779–95

Now in his seventies, Karīm had been ill for six months, though he remained active until the end. No sooner had he breathed his last than the folly and malice of his leading kinsmen, apparent though overshadowed during his reign, erupted unchecked to blast apart all that he had created. Karīm's three sons – the elder two, Abuʾl-Fatḥ and Muḥammad ʿAlī, frivolous and incompetent, and the youngest still a child – became pawns in a vicious struggle for supremacy. Even before the Vakīl had been buried, Zakī Khān, allied with ʿAlī Murād Khān and ostensibly proclaiming the Vakīl's second son, lured from the citadel and slaughtered Naẓar ʿAlī and Shaikh ʿAlī Khān and their supporters, who had battened onto Abuʾl-Fatḥ. Ṣādiq arrived from Baṣra to press his own claims to the succession, but was deserted by his army when Zakī threatened reprisals on their families in Shīrāz, and fled to Bam.

On the morning after the Vakīl's death, his Qājār hostage Āghā Muḥammad, who was allowed to go hunting outside the walls, escaped northwards. Zakī had sent in pursuit ʿAlī Murād Khān Zand, who now rebelled at Iṣfahān in the name of Abuʾl-Fatḥ. On his march against him, Zakī Khān committed such atrocities at the village of Īzadkhwāst that even his own men were shocked, and killed this monster on the spot. Ṣādiq was thus enabled to return and occupy Shīrāz, but was still opposed by ʿAlī Murād. After an eight-month blockade, Shīrāz fell by treachery in February 1781; Ṣādiq was murdered together with all his sons except Jaʿfar, who had come to terms privately with ʿAlī Murād.

ʿAlī Murād found himself faced with a resurgence of Qājār power and

established his capital strategically at Iṣfahān. He campaigned energetically in Māzandarān, but Jaᶜfar Khān took advantage of his absence to march on Iṣfahān. Hastening to defend his capital in midwinter against his doctors' advice, ᶜAlī Murād died at Mūrchakhūr in February 1785. His reign, which saw the Zands relinquish all claims to northern and even central Iran, can be seen as the watershed between Zand and Qājār history. Jaᶜfar Khān occupied Iṣfahān, but was driven out twice by Āghā Muḥammad and fell back on Shīrāz. In 1204/1789, his treachery in dealing with his own supporters provoked a mutiny in which he was killed.

He was succeeded by the young Luṭf ᶜAlī Khān, the only one of Karīm Khān's successors to have won admiration for his courage and integrity.[33] Having recovered Shīrāz from the mutineers, he then held it against a determined Qājār assault. His downfall was precipitated by a mutual distrust between him and Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm, the *kalāntar* (Mayor) of Fārs who had initially helped him to power. On his way to attack Iṣfahān in 1206/1791, Luṭf ᶜAlī was deserted by his army on the instigation of the Kalāntar's brother, and on racing back to Shīrāz found the city in the hands of Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm. Denied help from Būshahr, the young Zand prince nevertheless continued with the few troops still loyal to him and a few Arab levies to fight off the Qājār advance on Shīrāz, which Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm had offered to turn over to Āghā Muḥammad. At one point, he secured the Qājār camp in a daring night raid, but his forces scattered to plunder. At dawn it transpired that Āghā Muḥammad and the hard core of his army were still in the camp; Luṭf ᶜAlī had to flee eastwards. After several more vicissitudes he surprised Kirmān in 1794 and held it for four months before the Qājārs were admitted by treachery.

The Qājār eunuch behaved with studied barbarity in the fallen town: all adult males were killed or blinded, and some 20,000 women and children given as slaves to the troops. Luṭf ᶜAlī himself fled to Bam, where he was seized by the governor and handed over to the Qājārs. Āghā Muḥammad had his last Zand enemy blinded and cruelly tortured before taking him back to Tehran for execution. Luṭf ᶜAlī's courage and resilience had imparted a certain nobility to the death throes of the Zand dynasty; but the urban governors and headmen, the tribal chiefs and regional warlords, justifiably disillusioned with the Zands and not yet familiar with the Qājārs, had elected to turn a new page in the history of Iran.

[33] His career is sympathetically chronicled by Malcolm, II, pp. 175–201.

GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY UNDER THE ZANDS

The geographical extent of the Zand empire at its zenith, from 1765 to 1779, was in practice about half that of the Safavids. Sīstān and Balūchistān, never strongly held and regarded by Nādir mainly as a source of manpower, had remained aloof from the wrangling in western Iran on Nādir's assassination and under Naṣīr Khān Balūch were partly absorbed into the Durrānī empire; thus Lār and Kirmān, exercising a tenuous jurisdiction over the coastal shaikhdoms of Makrān, constituted the eastern marches of Karīm Khān's Iran. The natural frontiers of the Lūt and Kavīr deserts, and the turbulent Qājār province of Astarābād, separated the Zand state from the Afsharid kingdom of Khurāsān, which from 1755 was effectively a tributary of Aḥmad Shāh. The only contact between Zands and Afsharids seems to have been two visits to Shīrāz by Shāhrukh's son Naṣr-Allāh Mīrzā, in 1767 and 1775, which were requests for aid to further personal and factional interests rather than embassies. The prince was politely received but went home empty-handed.[34] There is no record of contact between the Vakīl and Aḥmad Shāh; it would seem that these two great contemporaries, having divided Nādir's empire so neatly between them, agreed tacitly to keep Khurāsān as a buffer between their separate interests and hostile peoples.

Gīlān was traditionally administered by its own governors even when incorporated by Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān into the Qājār realms, and this arrangement continued under the Zands. On leaving the north in 1763 Karīm re-appointed as beglerbegī at Rasht, Hidāyat-Allāh Khān, who controlled this keystone of the northern provinces until his death, engineered by Aghā Muḥammad Khān, in 1784. He maintained a brilliant court and a powerful army, but prudently kept up his annual tax remittance to Shīrāz, supplemented by gifts and special orders of silks. His sister was married to Karīm Khān's eldest son, Abu'l-Fatḥ. His revenue was augmented by trade with the Russians, who maintained a post at Anzalī (Enzeli).

Āẕarbāījān and the provinces south of the Caucasus, including the tributary Christian kingdom of Georgia, were conceptually an indispensable part of Safavid Iran. However, Safavid pretensions to rule Georgia, and even her southern Muslim neighbours of Shīrvān, Qarābāgh and Nakhchivān, had been shaken by Peter the Great's incursion of 1722 and, although the chroniclers

[34] Ghifārī, pp. 160–1; *Factory Records* XVII, 1085 (1 February 1775).

ignore it, Iran's hold on the regions north of the Aras was completely eroded over the next forty years. Āẕarbāījān under its beglerbegī at Tabrīz, Najaf Qulī Khān Dunbulī, whose son was held hostage at Shīrāz, was the only province of this region to owe direct allegiance and pay direct taxes to the Vakīl during his fourteen years in Shīrāz. The most powerful of the Transaraxian khans was Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Qubbaʾī (or Darbandī), who ruled over much of the region corresponding to Soviet Āẕarbāījān from the 1760s until 1789; regarded by the Persian chroniclers as a vassal of the neo-Safavid Zand state, he was in fact autonomous, maintained friendly relations with his Georgian neighbour and, like him, sought Russian financial and military aid against threats from the Ottomans and rival Dāghistānī khans.

Heraclius of Georgia, after his occupation of Erivan in 1749 and defeat of his former ally Āzād in 1751–2, could afford largely to ignore the changing situation south of the Aras. After it became obvious that Mashhad was no longer the seat of government, and probably about the time of the Zand army's progress through Āẕarbāījān (1762–63), Heraclius tendered his submission to the Vakīl and received his diploma as Vālī of Gurjistān – the traditional Safavid office, by this time an empty honorific. From 1752, increasing appeals to Russia for subsidies and troops against Lezgī and Turkish attacks had brought Georgia more closely under Russian influence. With the Vakīl's death and the belligerent Qājār expansion in the north it became no longer either necessary or indeed desirable to curry favour with Iran; following through a proposal he had made as early as 1771, Heraclius in 1783 formally placed Georgia under Russian protection. There was no direct Russian contact with the Vakīl. In the spring of 1784 Catherine II sent an embassy to ʿAlī Murād Khān in response to his *ex post facto* offer to cede the Transaraxian khanates in exchange for recognition and aid against the Qājārs; but ʿAlī Murād died before this agreement could be ratified.[35]

A more important area where the Safavid conceptual heritage clashed with the exigencies of historical fact is that of the nature of the Zand ruler's authority. Such was the abstract prestige of the Safavid Shah, especially since Nādir's premature and unpopular usurpation of the throne, that the early contenders for power in the interregnum found it necessary to create and carry around with them the nonentity Ismāʿīl III, as a talisman to canvass support and legitimize their power. Their respect for their protégé was non-existent, and Karīm was content once he settled at Shīrāz in 1764 to immure the Shah in the fortress of

[35] Ferrières de Sauveboeuf, *Mémoires Historiques, Politiques et Géographiques* II pp. 202–3; Butkov, II, pp. 148–9; III, pp. 179, 182.

Ābāda with adequate pension and provisions and an annual Naurūz present from his supposed viceroy.

The title originally assumed by Karīm (though not attested in this form) was presumably vakīl al-daula, "viceroy of the state", which in Safavid times implied supreme command of the Shah's army and politico-military dictatorship on his behalf. It had been conferred on Nādir by Ṭahmāsp II, was assumed by ᶜAlī Mardān Khān on his investiture of Ismāᶜīl, and in turn inherited by Karīm Khān. But soon after settling in Shīrāz, the Zand leader is said to have changed the form of his title to vakīl al-raᶜāyā, "representative of the people". This title, which from Safavid times into the present century designated a local magistrate appointed by the crown to investigate cases of oppression or corruption, perhaps continues a centuries-old tradition of a provincial ombudsman in Iran.[36] Karīm insisted on this appellation for the rest of his reign, declining to assume the title of *shāh*, even when Ismāᶜīl III died almost unnoticed in 1187/1773. It became obvious that *vakīl* was in effect a personal honorific while Karīm's position was equivalent to that of *shāh*. His successors of the Zand dynasty apparently did not adopt the title of *vakīl*.

Karīm Khān owed his undiminished popularity in large measure to the fact that he thus respected the surviving Safavid prejudice and the distrust of the long-oppressed masses of any new despot who might emulate Nādir. At the same time he realized that the Safavid ghost was ready to be quietly laid by a government that could justify itself by humane and efficient policies rather than by appeal to a threadbare charisma, and allowed the outworn device of a regency to drop into oblivion.[37]

Nor did Karīm Khān seek the sanction of the ᶜulamā for his novel position. Formerly the bulwarks of the Shah's authority as viceroy of God and the Imāms, their power had already been weakened by Nādir's quasi-Sunnī religious policy and his resumption of much *vaqf* property to pay for his army. During the interregnum, many of the ᶜulamā emigrated to the shrines of Iraq, so that those who remained or returned in Karīm's reign found their sanction unwanted by a tribal leader whose own religion was perfunctory at best. He upheld the Shīᶜa in a conventional way, having coin struck in the name of the hidden Imām, building mosques and shrines, and allotting stipends to religious functionaries in Shīrāz. Ṣūfī dervishes also began to return to Iran in his reign, but their persecution at the hands of the ᶜulamā – a recurrent phenomenon throughout

[36] See Perry, "Justice for the Underprivileged", esp. pp. 211–12.
[37] For further discussion of these points, see Perry, "The Last Safavids".

the greater Safavid period – was not encouraged until later Zand and early Qājār times, when the collapse of central government provoked a sometimes violent assertion of civic responsibility by provincial ᶜulamā and their urban allies. Thus, of the Niᶜmat-Allāhīs, Nūr ᶜAlī Shāh was mutilated at Mūrchakhūr in ᶜAlī Murād's time, Mushtāq ᶜAlī Shāh was killed by a mob in Kirmān during Luṭf ᶜAlī Khān's rule and several more were condemned to death by the *mujtahid* Āqā Muḥammad ᶜAlī in Kirmānshāh up until the early years of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh Qājār.[38]

The Vakīl kept central political control firmly in his own hands. Despite a considerable survival of Safavid court offices and protocol, none of the resident amīrs or civil officials rose to special prominence. His vazīrs functioned as clerks and companions of his leisure hours rather than colleagues in government; in this he followed Nādir's precedent and anticipated Āghā Muḥammad. Throughout this period, from Abuʾl-Fatḥ Khān's fate in the Iṣfahān triumvirate to Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm's relationship with first Luṭf ᶜAlī Khān and then Āghā Muḥammad, it is abundantly clear that the necessary alliance between the tribal ruler and his urban bureaucracy was never one of mutual trust.

The raw materials of Karīm's original coalition – the Lurī, Lakī and Hamadān plains tribes of the Zand, Vand, Zangana, Kalhur and Qarāgūzlū – remained closely connected with the Zand chief after his rise to power, providing more than half of his standing army of Fārs while serving also as wardens of the Zand homeland and the Kurdish and Lurī marches. The Zangana in particular, who governed Kirmānshāh throughout this period, were well represented at court, and Ḥaidar Khān was twice sent as ambassador to Baghdad. Control of more distant tribes was often largely nominal, the Vakīl merely confirming a *de facto* chief. Transportation of an insubordinate tribe was applied only once, against the Bakhtiyārī in 1764. The urban centres of tribal territories, such as Qājār Astarābād and Sārī, or Mushaᶜshaᶜ Shūshtar and Dizfūl, were administered by a local dignitary who was in theory a government-appointed beglerbegī, but in practice a tribal chieftain kept in line by means of hostages and shows of force. Tribal groups which, like the Zand themselves, had returned from exile, were welcomed and encouraged to settle in western Iran.

The years from 1722 to 1764 appeared to the townsmen and villagers of Iran a constant vicious circle of military occupation and extortion by a series of freebooters who used funds squeezed from one area to ravage another. Karīm Khān had to remedy some forty years of artificial famine and depopulation, to

[38] Cf. Browne, *Literary History of Persia* IV, p. 368; Algar, *Religion and State in Iran 1785–1906*, pp. 32–3, 38.

which he himself had of necessity contributed during his struggle for power. His approach to this was typically pragmatic and straightforward: his promises were always kept, his threats never empty. He is never reported to have made the extravagant and hypocritical gesture characteristic of Nādir and his Afsharid successors in declaring a tax amnesty, except in the case of Kirmān on evidence of genuine hardship, nor was he remiss in claiming his dues. He insisted instead on closely vetting the tax returns of governors and their minions every year. Those too rapacious would be dismissed and fined. All government officials, the beglerbegī of a province or *ḥākim* of a major town and their subordinates in administration, were paid a fixed government salary which was reviewed periodically together with their appointments.[39]

The Vakīl succeeded in repopulating his devastated kingdom primarily through his restoration of internal security and his reputation for justice, rather than by any overt propaganda. Shīʿī Muslims needed little encouragement to return from the insecurity of exile in Iraq, and the Vakīl encouraged the growing influx by active invitations to Christians and Jews, the merchants and bankers of the community, to return and settle in thriving Shīrāz. One such caravan from Baghdad in 1763 was said to have numbered about 10,000 returning refugees.[40] Under Karīm Khān Shīrāz became the largest Jewish centre in Iran, and Armenians were encouraged to resettle round Shīrāz and Iṣfahān by the gift of complete villages.

The *Rustam al-tavārīkh* provides evidence of the Vakīl's active interest in the problems of a depressed agriculture.[41] In the autumn of 1189/1775, a severe famine in Iṣfahān and Fārs obliged Karīm to throw open the state granaries for the relief of the poor. In Iṣfahān, the grain was sold to the populace at a fixed rate of 100 dīnārs per *man-i Tabrīz* (equivalent to 6½lb); at Shīrāz, the shortage was so acute that grain had to be brought from as far afield as Tehran, Qazvīn and even Āẕarbāījān, so that on arrival the cost had soared to 1400 dīnārs per *man*. Despite the urgings of his ministers to cover these expenses, the Vakīl insisted on distributing this grain at the same nominal rate as at Iṣfahān, and with the aid of this heavy subsidy the famine was eventually beaten.

Karīm Khān's contribution to the architecture of Shīrāz (most of which is still standing despite four subsequent earthquakes and the destructive malice of Āghā Muḥammad Khān when he sacked the town in 1206/1792) is worth special mention, less for its artistic merit than as an example of planned urban renewal –

[39] E.g. *Farmāns* Nos. xx, xxi in British Library MS Or. 4935; cf. Rustam al-Ḥukamā', *Rustam al-Tavārīkh*, p. 307.

[40] *Carmelite Chronicle* i, pp. 662–63, 672.

[41] Pp. 421–2.

the first since Shāh ʿAbbās's re-construction of Iṣfahān – inspired primarily by military and political considerations. Having undergone two sieges by the Qājārs, the Vakīl's first concern was for the defences of the sprawling and poorly-walled city. Over the year 1180/1766–7, the perimeter of 1½ *farsakhs* was cut to one *farsakh* (about six kilometres) by the demolition of older, outlying buildings and earthworks, and the amalgamation of several quarters; the number of gates was reduced from at least twelve to six, piercing a stout new wall with eighty round towers and a broad ditch. The huge labour force involved was paid from the royal treasury, as in the case of the Vakīl's other buildings. These are the *arg* or citadel and the palace complex, the Vakīl's bazaar (still functioning, although bisected by the main modern thoroughfare), the Vakīl's mosque, and various baths and caravanserais. He also renovated various shrines and tombs, including those of Shāh Shujāʿ, Ḥāfiẓ and Saʿdī. Nor did he neglect to perpetuate his city's just renown for beautiful gardens, laying out new complexes inside and outside Shīrāz.[42]

The southward shift in the political centre of gravity emphasized the Gulf and Indian Ocean commerce, which in turn enriched the capital. In addition to encouraging trade with the European companies, the Vakīl received two embassies from the powerful Ḥaidar ʿAlī of the Deccan, about 1184/1769–70 and in 1774.[43] The Indians were promised trading facilities at Bandar ʿAbbās, but the main purpose of these missions may have been to reconcile the Vakīl and the Imām of Muscat, with whom Ḥaidar ʿAlī was already on good terms, so as to make the Gulf safer for neutral shipping. At Shīrāz the Indian merchants had their own caravanserai and, like all the wholesalers and retailers of the capital, benefited from the low rent charged for use of the Vakīl's bazaar and caravanserai.[44]

Karīm's policy of attracting merchants and artisans, and encouraging the officers and men of his tribal army and their dependants to set up residence in and around Shīrāz, considerably increased its population. Estimates by contemporary visitors put the figure at between 40,000 and 50,000 inhabitants, which compares very favourably with estimates for ruined Iṣfahān over the same period (between 20,000 and 50,000).[45] Order and security were well maintained both within the city and in its environs, as is confirmed by several contemporary travellers. Niebuhr was assured on his way to Būshahr by a party of Arab pilgrims that "nowhere in the world could one travel with such safety as in

[42] See Nāmī, pp. 154–5; Ghifārī, pp. 155–6; Francklin, *Observations made on a tour from Bengal to Persia*, pp. 51–5. [43] Ghifārī, p. 169; *Factory Records* XVII, 1069.
[44] Francklin, pp. 58–9. [45] E.g. Kinneir, p. 64; *Lettres Edifiantes*, p. 354.

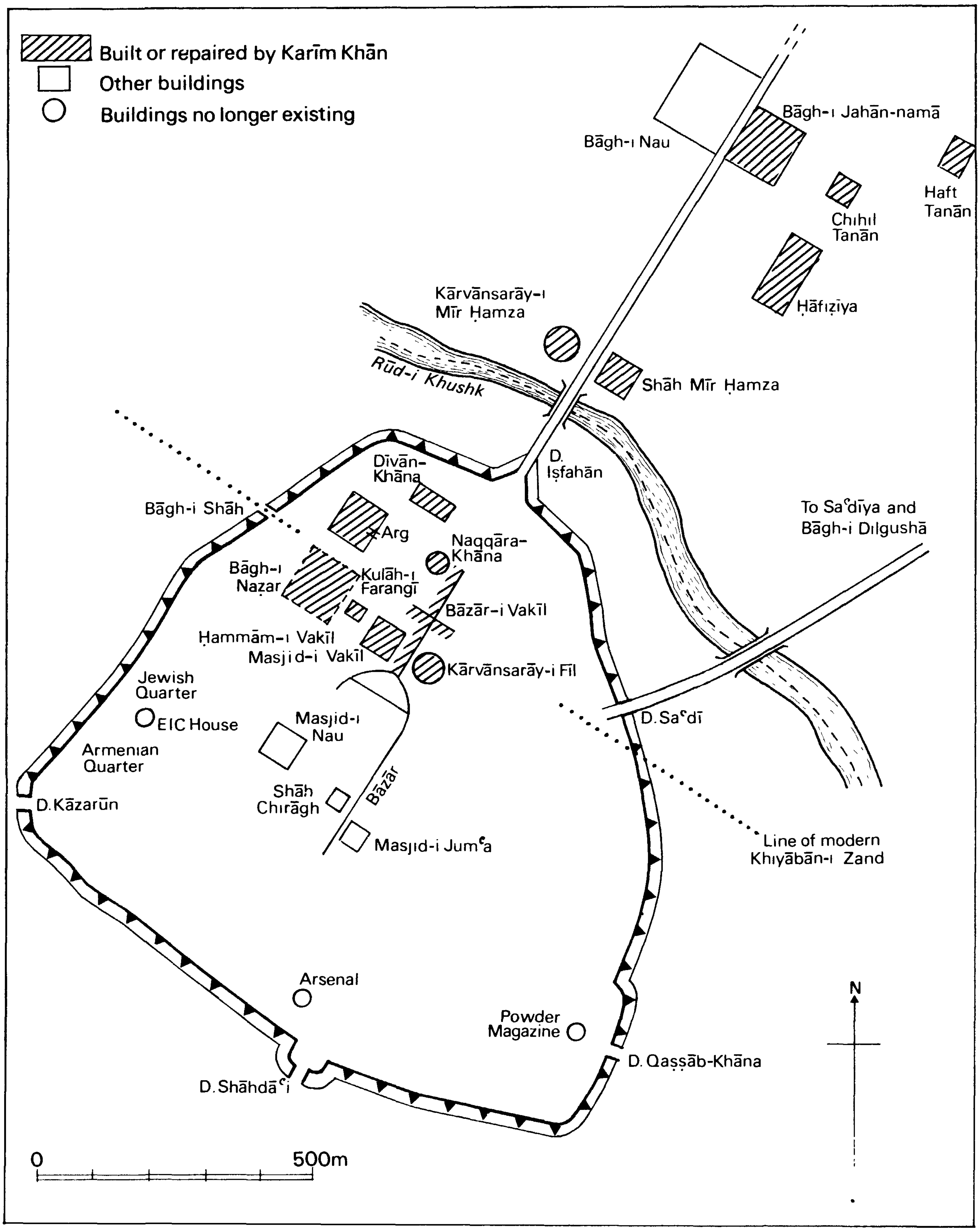


Fig. 1 Shīrāz at the time of Karīm Khān Zand.

Persia".[46] The large standing army of Fārs, when not on campaign, was kept amused by a well-run brothel quarter, the staff of which were in turn heavily taxed, and thus played their part in the economic as well as the social scheme of the Zand metropolis.[47]

There are more stories told of Karīm Khān's kindness, simplicity, generosity and justice than about any other Iranian monarch. As the archetype of the good king with a genuine concern for his people he overshadows Khusrau Anūshīrvān the Just or Shāh ᶜAbbās the Great; where these and other rulers surpass him in military glory and international prestige, the Zand Khān quietly retains even today an unparalleled place in his countrymen's affections as a good man who became and remained a good monarch. He was not ashamed of his humble origin, and was never tempted to seek for himself a more illustrious pedigree than that of the chief of a hitherto obscure Zagros tribe who had once lived by brigandage. As a poor soldier in Nādir's army he once stole a gold-embossed saddle from outside a saddlery where it had been left for repair, but on learning that the saddler had been held responsible for its loss and was to be hanged, he was smitten by conscience and surreptitiously replaced the saddle.[48] As Vakīl, he retained his simple tastes in clothes and furniture, and bowed to the dictates of his station only to the extent of having a bath and a change of clothes once a month, an extravagance that is said to have shocked his fellow-tribesmen. His physical courage is frequently emphasized, and the history of his campaigns sufficiently illustrates that what he may cede to Nādir Shāh in military genius he more than recoups in tenacity of purpose and resilience in apparent defeat.

What above all made his reign a success was his closeness to his subjects, his identification of his own needs with theirs, and his consequent tolerance and magnanimity shown to all classes. The manifest genuineness of this attitude, its remoteness from any bulwark of assumed piety or disguised self-interest, ensure him a favourable mention by contemporary writers of every loyalty. He remained easy of access for all, setting apart a regular time each day for receiving complaints and petitions in the traditional manner. Traditional, too, was his indulgence in wine, opium and all-night debauches, though these seem seldom to have prejudiced his efficient and humane conduct of government.

Apart from a few arguably ill-considered ventures such as the wars against Oman and Ottoman Iraq, the Vakīl's military enterprises were of a defensive and conservative nature. His treasury remained empty by design, as incoming

[46] *Reisebeschreibungen* II, p. 178. Cf. also Francklin, p. 130; Scott Waring, p. 302.
[47] Rustam al-Ḥukamā, p. 340ff; Dunbulī, II, p. 47ff.
[48] For this and similar stories see Malcolm, II, p. 148ff.

revenue was ploughed back into the country in the form of buildings and amenities, wages and pensions, and internal security. Fixed tax assessments and price controls guaranteed the peasantry subsistence survival with a chance to improve their lot in good years, and must have mollified their well-founded distrust of tribal rulers. Karīm made it a personal rule not to appropriate windfalls: just as in his years of struggle he distributed booty among his troops and new allies, so in the period of consolidation he refused to confiscate the residue of those deceased without immediate heir, and when during the rebuilding of Shīrāz a pot of gold coins was unearthed he shared it out amongst the workmen on the site.[49]

During his fourteen years of rule from Shīrāz, Karīm Khān succeeded in restoring a surprising degree of material prosperity and peace to a land ravaged and disoriented by his predecessors. Obviously his virtues are greatly enhanced by their juxtaposition with the savagery and tyranny of Nādir Shāh and Āghā Muḥammad Khān, and undeniably the state he created was disgraced and destroyed by his unworthy successors; but his rare combination of strength and purpose with common sense and humanity produced, for a brief period in a particularly bloody and chaotic century, a stable and honest government.

[49] See Rustam al-Ḥukamā, pp. 310, 420, 421.

CHAPTER 3

ĀGHĀ MUḤAMMAD KHĀN AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE QĀJĀR DYNASTY

THE EMERGENCE OF THE QĀJĀRS

The preceding chapter described the unsuccessful attempt by a small tribal confederation in south-west Iran, led by the Zands, to establish control over the other tribal groupings on the Iranian plateau. Its failure was due to the limited number of fighting men whom the Zands and their confederates could muster for sustained campaigning; the family rivalries and divisions of the ruling house after Karīm Khān Zand's death in 1193/1779; the superior military resources of the Qājārs; and not least, the single-minded ambition of their ultimate nemesis, Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār. In this chapter, his career will be placed within the context of the rise of the Qājārs, one of the original components of the Safavids' Qizilbāsh confederacy. For Āghā Muḥammad Khān's bid for overall kingship, the disturbed condition of late 18th-century Iran proved particularly favourable.

As for the Qājārs' early history, there is a late tradition that they were part of the Turkish Oghuz confederacy, and first entered Iran with other Oghuz tribes in the 11th century. However, neither of the surviving lists of Oghuz tribes, those of Maḥmūd Kashgharī and Rashīd al-Dīn, include them, although both mention the Afshārs. Conceivably, they were an element in a larger tribe (the Bayāts have been suggested as the most likely), from which they later broke away. The same late tradition claims an eponymous ancestor for the tribe in Qājār Noyan, the son of a Mongol, Sartuq Noyan, who was supposed to be *Atābeg* to the Īl-Khān Arghūn. Qājār Noyan was also alleged to be an ancestor of Tīmūr.

If credibility is accorded to such references, early Qājār history might hypothetically be reconstructed as follows: with the break-up of the Il-Khanate, following the death of Abū Saʿīd in 736/1335, the Qājārs, already an independent tribe, moved westwards in the direction of Syria or Anatolia, perhaps into the country around Diyarbakr or Erlat. Later, during the 15th century, possibly during the reign of the Āq Qūyūnlū ruler, Uzun Ḥasan (857–82/1453–78), or that of Yaʿqūb (883–96/1478–90), the Qājārs established themselves in



Map 2. Iran during the lifetime of Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār

Āẕarbāījān and, from that time, became associated with the area of Erivan, Ganja and Qarābāgh. Presumably, it was also during the Āq Qūyūnlū ascendancy that the Qājārs, like other Oghuz tribes in Āẕarbāījān and eastern Anatolia, fell under the influence of Ithnā-ʿAsharī (Twelver) Shiʿism, and became *murīds* (disciples) of the Shaikhs of Ardabīl. All this, it should be emphasized, is hypothesis.[1]

With the rise of the Safavids, the Qājārs begin to assume historical visibility. A contingent of them was among the 7,000 tribesmen who accompanied the

[1] See Sümer, "Bayat", *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., I, p. 1117; Sümer, "Kādjār", *idem*, IV, p. 387; Lambton, "Ḳādjār", *idem*, IV, p. 387ff. Also Reid, *Tribalism*, and Sümer, *Oğuzlar*. Indicative of the opprobrium attached to the Qājār name during the 19th century was the rumour that linked their origins with Damascus and their ancestors with the army of the execrated Yazīd. Morier, "Account", *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* VII, p. 231.

future Shāh Ismāʿīl on his triumphant march from Arzinjān to Shīrvān in 906/1500–1,[2] and thereafter, they were a conspicuous element of the Qizilbāsh confederacy. For the remainder of the 16th century, there were few major events in which one or more Qājār amīrs did not play a part, although, in terms of numbers, the Qājārs were among the less prominent Qizilbāsh tribes.

Probably during the Safavid period, the well-established division between the two rival branches of the Yūkhārī-bāsh and the Ashāqa-bāsh Qājārs emerged, each further sub-divided into the clans of the Qūyūnlū, Develū, Izz al-Dīnlū, Ziyādlū, etc. The Qūyūnlū clan of the Ashāqa-bāsh branch provided the ruling dynasty of Iran from the late 18th to the early 20th century, while their erstwhile rivals, the Develū clan of the Yūkhārī-bāsh branch, provided many of the functionaries and military commanders of the kingdom.

Tradition has it that, partly because he mistrusted their growing power, and partly to strengthen his north-eastern frontier against the Uzbeks and Türkmens, Shāh ʿAbbās I divided the Qājār tribe, by relocating a large number of them in northern Khurāsān and Gurgān with other Qizilbāsh and Kurdish tribes. The majority were apparently settled in or around Astarābād, although Āq Qalʿa on the river Gurgān was originally their principal habitat.[3] In Gurgān they shared the province with the indigenous Iranian and long-settled Arab population, as well as with other tribal groups, principally Jalāyirids and Bayāts. In Khurāsān they were to be found in Sabzavār and Turshīz, in Chahcha and Mekhne between Kalāt and Sarakhs, and most importantly, in Marv, where they shared the oasis with a mixed Iranian, Arab and Tatar population, and constituted the front line of defence against the Uzbeks.

From the time of this division, the Qājārs in the Erivan, Ganja and Qarābāgh region gradually disappeared, absorbed by new tribal groups. Those in Marv survived the arrival into the area of the Yamūt Türkmens, and also the repeated interventions of Nādir Shāh into the affairs of the oasis, but finally succumbed about 1200/1785 to the raids of Shāh Murād, the Mangit Khān of Bukhārā. Thus only the Qājārs of Gurgān proved strong and numerous enough to retain their identity during the upheavals following the break-up of the Safavid kingdom and the tumultuous years of Nādir Shāh's rule. They no doubt benefitted from their isolated location, enjoying limited protection from the north-east by the Qara-Qum desert, and from the south-west by the swamps and forests of

[2] Ḥasan-i Rūmlū, *Chronicle*, p. 41.

[3] Rizā Qulī Khān, *Relation*, p. 29; Fraser, *Narrative*, p. 620; Rabino, *Mazandaran*, p. 86. According to Rizā Qulī Khān, Āq Qalʿa (Mubārakābād) was divided into two quarters to keep the Yūkhārī-bāsh and Ashāqa-bāsh apart; *op. cit.*, p. 38.

Māzandarān and the sweep of the Alburz range. Yet their location was not so remote that they could not easily strike in the direction of Tehran via Sārī and Firūzkūh, into Rasht along the coast, into Qūmis (the Simnān-Damghan-Shāhrud area) via Ribāṭ-i Safīd and Bisṭām, or into Khurāsān by way of Khabūshān (Qūchān), while the wastes of the Qara-Qum never prevented regular contact with the region of the lower Āmū-Daryā (Oxus), and provided a refuge in times of crisis. The Qājārs maintained a relationship with the Yamūt, Göklen, and other Türkmen tribes of the Qara-Qum, in which trade, occasional raiding and outright hostilities, marriage and military alliances all played a part.[4] As "lords of the marches" in the zone between Türkmen nomadic pastoralism and Iranian sedentary agriculture, the Qājārs maintained an uneasy balance between the traditions of the Iranian plateau and those of the steppes.

Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, the founder of the fortunes of the Ashāqa-bāsh Qājārs of Astarābād in the 18th century, was the son of a certain Shāh Qulī Khān of the Qūyūnlū Qājārs of Ganja. He had made his way to Gurgān and married into the Qūyūnlū Qājārs of Astarābād. The date of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān's birth is given variously, ranging from 1097/1685–6 to 1104/1692–3. Before the Ghilzai invasion of Iran, he was reputed to be a military commander of some consequence, and had once served as *ḥākim* of Mashhad. In 1133–4/1720 he had been ordered to assist an incompetent royal commander in the pacification of Khurāsān, but was worsted in battle by Malik Maḥmūd Sīstānī and withdrew to his base in Astarābād. The Afghan siege of Iṣfahān in 1134–35/1721–2 may have brought him out of his retreat,[5] but Ṭahmāsp's subsequent flight from the capital offered Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Qājār an opening to prove his loyalty to the Safavids. Ṭahmāsp reached the vicinity of Tehran. According to Father Krusinski, the Safavid forces, on turning back towards Qum to face the pursuing Afghans, included some Qājār tribesmen, described as "hardy and trusty Fellows, of approv'd Fidelity".[6] Ṭahmāsp, short of men and at that time lacking potential allies, needed the 9,000 fighting men whom, according to Krusinski, the Qājārs of Astarābād could muster. Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān was rewarded with the appointment of

[4] Marriage alliances between the Qājārs and Türkmens of the Qara-Qum were by no means uncommon, as in the case of Bahrām ʿAlī Khān of Marv, whose mother was a Salor and whose father was a Qājār. See Bukhārī, *Histoire*, p. 58. The vendettas and alliances between the Qājārs and the Türkmens were a permanent feature of this period.

[5] See p. 14 *supra* and Krusinski, *History* II, p. 79. Lockhart rejects the tradition preserved in the Qājār chronicles, of how Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān and his followers had previously made their way to Iṣfahān during the course of the Ghilzai siege and offered their services to Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain; here allegedly, the Qājār chieftain became an object of jealousy at the Safavid court, and eventually withdrew in disgust. Lockhart, *The Fall of the Ṣafavī Dynasty*, p. 280. Cf. Lambton, *op. cit.*

[6] Krusinski, *op. cit.* II, p. 175.

Iʿtimād al-Daula to Ṭahmāsp, of whose entourage he thus became the leading member. By joining the Safavid fugitive, he acquired a position which could be exploited at the appropriate time. Moreover, Ṭahmāsp's fortunes appeared to be improving. Russian interest in the Caspian provinces had receded after Peter the Great's death in 1725. Ashraf the Afghan was embroiled with the Ottomans and was cut off from the Ghilzai base at Qandahar. The Abdālīs in Herat were preoccupied with their own quarrels. The nearest and least formidable enemy was Malik Maḥmūd Sīstānī, striving to be master of Khurāsān. To campaign against Malik Maḥmūd, Ṭahmāsp accompanied Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān to Astarābād to collect more troops. The Qājār chieftain became a mainstay to Ṭahmāsp and was appointed his *Vakīl al-Daula*, while other Qājār chieftains were granted lesser titles (Dhuʾl-Qaʿda 1138/July 1726).

The grant of the title and office of *Vakīl al-Daula* confirmed that Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān was the real power in Ṭahmāsp's camp and set a precedent followed on several later occasions: Nādir Khān Afshār adopted the same title in 1144–45/1732, when he replaced Ṭahmāsp with the eight-month-old ʿAbbās III; ʿAlī Mardān Khān Bakhtiyārī assumed it in 1163–4/1750 on behalf of Ismāʿīl III; and Karīm Khān Zand likewise, on behalf of the same figure-head a year later.

The Safavid Shah and his Qājār supporters set off to capture Mashhad from Malik Maḥmūd Sīstānī, but at Khabūshān Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān (later Nādir Shāh) joined them with a small force of Afshārs and Kurds. By the time the army resumed its march towards Mashhad, this newcomer had completely ingratiated himself with Ṭahmāsp. When they came within sight of the city, the rivalry between Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān and Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān was approaching its climax. The circumstances of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān's fall remain obscure; he was murdered on 14 Ṣafar 1139/11 October 1726. It is possible that Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Develū of the Yūkhārī-bāsh Qājārs of Astarābād was implicated in these events; from this time onwards he became the most prominent figure in the Gurgān region.

THE CAREER OF MUḤAMMAD ḤASAN KHĀN QĀJĀR

Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān's death left his troops in the Safavid service. They continued to serve Shāh Ṭahmāsp, and after his overthrow, Nādir Shāh. Leadership of the Qājārs now shifted from the Qūyūnlū clan of the Ashāqa-bāsh branch, to the Develū clan of the Yūkhārī-bāsh. The late Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān had apparently failed to consolidate his leadership over all the Astarābād Qājārs. Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Develū, who had joined Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān (later Nādir Shāh), pros-

pered in his service and was rewarded with the rank of *beglerbegī* of Astarābād. Subsequently, however, Nādir Shāh ceased to trust Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān and on one occasion ordered him to dismantle a fort which he had erected in Astarābād. Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān transferred his loyalty to Nādir's son, Riżā Qulī, and during Nādir's absence in India, when rumours of his death reached Iran, Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān persuaded Riżā Qulī to murder the captive Ṭahmāsp and his two sons, ʿAbbās and Ismāʿīl, in prison in Sabzavār. The Qājār chieftain himself carried out the deed, with conspicuous brutality, probably in the latter part of Dhuʾl-Qaʿda 1152/February 1740. Following the attempt on Nādir Shāh's life in Ṣafar-Rabīʿ I 1154/May 1741, interrogation of the attacker implicated Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān, as well as Riżā Qulī. However, the former survived, perhaps because he combined the office of beglerbegī of Astarābād with that of leader of the Qājār contingent in Nādir's army. Muḥammad Zamān Khān, his son, acted as his deputy in Astarābād when he was absent with Nādir's forces. He lived to be a leader in the conspiracy which resulted in Nādir Shāh's assassination (1160/1747).

Meanwhile, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān's surviving son, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, had become a rival to Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān. He later proved himself a courageous and resourceful leader, but in his youth lacked sufficient manpower to challenge the prevailing Develū hegemony in Astarābād. Thus he spent his early years as a fugitive, protected by the Yamūt Türkmens, who pursued a policy of "*divide et impera*" towards their Qājār neighbours. It is certain that, at the time of the birth of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān's eldest son, Muḥammad (7 Muḥarram 1155/14 March 1742), he himself was in hiding in the Qara-Qum desert and the child's mother, also of the Qūyūnlū clan, was concealed in the house of Āghā Sayyid Mufīd in Astarābād, where the future Shah was brought up as the son of the *sayyid*.

Some two years after this, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān launched an attack on Astarābād, presumably directed as much against his Develū rival as against Nādir Shāh. A further inducement was the presence of part of the royal treasure in Astarābād. There is no reason to suppose that the attack was not long planned, since Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān had contacted the Safavid pretender, Sām Mīrzā. According to the English merchant, Jonas Hanway, the attack occurred on the 30 Dhuʾl-Qaʿda 1156/15 January 1744, only a few days after Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān had been in the city, presumably for reconnaissance purposes and to enlist supporters among the entourage of the ḥākim, Muḥammad Zamān Khān, son of the beglerbegī, Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān, then absent from the province.

Aided by 2,000 Qājār and other tribal supporters, and 1,000 Yamūt auxiliaries, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān made an easy conquest. Muḥammad Zamān Khān fled, and Astarābād passed without a fight into Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān's possession. Thereafter, however, disaster struck. The Safavid pretender had been captured even before the uprising took place; approaches to the beglerbegī of neighbouring Māzandarān, made on the strength of earlier exchanges, were now rejected; and having acquired a share of the plunder of Astarābād, the Yamūt chieftains lost interest in the enterprise, although not before a quarrel had broken out over division of the spoils.

Meanwhile, Nādir Shāh had ordered Bihbūd Khān, *sardār* of the Atak, to take the field; he marched on Astarābād and defeated Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān several stages to the east of the city. Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān fled into the Qara-Qum. Bihbūd Khān entered Astarābād where, joined by Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Develū, he loosed a reign of terror on the Ashāqa-bāsh Qājārs and their alleged supporters. Hanway records seeing two pyramids of skulls, one consisting of Bihbūd Khān's victims, and the other of Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān's, near the entrance to the city. If Muḥammad and his mother were still in concealment in Āghā Sayyid Mufīd's house, they were lucky that their presence was not discovered.

Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān accompanied his Yamūt allies, recently driven out of Khwārazm into Manqishlaq, in an attack upon the ruler of Khiva, Abu'l-Ghāzī Khān, who was, as his father, Īlbārs Khān, had been, a client of Nādir Shāh. In addition, Khiva was threatened by an uprising of the Salor Türkmens. Abu'l-Ghāzī Khān appealed to Nādir Shāh for aid. Nādir Shāh ordered his nephew, ʿAlī Qulī Khān (the future ʿĀdil Shāh), ḥākim of Mashhad, and Bihbūd Khān, sardār of the Atak, to assist the Khān of Khiva, and once again Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān found himself fighting along side the Yamūt against his late father's Afsharid foes. The feud between the Qūyūnlū Qājārs and the Afsharids, as well as with the Develū Qājārs and, later, the Zands, helps to explain the conduct of Aghā Muḥammad Khān at a later period. In one encounter, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān fought Bihbūd Khān single-handed and wounded him, but he and his Türkmen allies were finally defeated and forced to flee into the Qara-Qum desert, where Nādir Shāh's troops sought them in vain.

Following Nādir Shāh's assassination in 1160/1747, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān again tried to seize Astarābād. He was again assisted by the Yamūt, led by their chieftain, Bekenj Khān, and later by the Göklen. This revolt was suppressed by Nādir Shāh's nephew, ʿAlī Qulī Khān, now reigning as ʿĀdil Shāh, who, having learnt of the existence of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān's son, Muḥammad, then about six years old and still living in Astarābād, ordered him

to be brought to Mashhad. He apparently intended to kill the boy, but was prevailed upon to spare his life and castrate him instead; hence, the later sobriquet of *Āghā* (eunuch). Soon after ᶜĀdil Shāh's death (1161/1748), Āghā Muḥammad was restored to his family and, for the next ten years, shared his father's adventurous life. During this period Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān made a determined effort to become ruler of all Iran.

This ambition was not unrealistic for a tribal chieftain who had already established a reputation for determination and courage. The descendants of Nādir Shāh were weakened by mutual rivalries. In the east, the Abdālī Afghans of Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī (1160–87/1747–73) were nominally in possession of Khurāsān, but looked towards the Indus as a natural area for expansion. In the west, the situation was in flux. Iṣfahān was dominated by ᶜAlī Mardān Khān and his Bakhtiyārīs. In Fārs and Luristān, Karīm Khān Zand had a formidable tribal following. In Āẕarbāījān, the Afghan adventurer, Āzād Khān, seemed secure and able to expand his territory. Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān consolidated his grip upon Gurgān and Māzandarān, extended his suzerainty into Gīlān, and then, in 1164/1751, struck out to relieve ᶜAlī Mardān Khān's forces in Kirmānshāh, which were besieged by Karīm Khān Zand. News of ᶜAlī Mardān Khān's defeat led Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān to withdraw rapidly towards Astarābād, pursued by Karīm Khān Zand, who besieged the city (1165/1751–2). Eventually, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, assisted by his Yamūt allies, led Karīm Khān's forces into an ambush; the Zands withdrew to Tehran, leaving the Safavid puppet, Ismāᶜīl III, a pawn in Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān's hands. Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān then set about the recovery of Māzandarān and Gīlān, where the local rulers had abandoned his cause as soon as his fortunes appeared to be ebbing.

In Gīlān, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān showed his determination to bring order to the region. He found the province particularly torn by a feud between the rulers of Shaft and Fūmin, the former supported by another local ruler, Mīrzā Zakī of Gaskar. Since the Shaft-Gaskar faction was in the ascendant, he supported the Fūmin faction in the person of the young Hidāyat-Allāh Khān, whom he appointed governor, although with his own representative to assist him. After the death of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān in 1172/1759, Hidāyat-Allāh Khān renounced his Qājār allegiance and submitted to Karīm Khān Zand, who confirmed his appointment, but left him to his own devices. He maintained a refined court in Rasht, financed by the silk industry and the sea trade between Enzeli and Astrakhan. However, he was treacherous and bloodthirsty, even by the standards of the age, and his eventual overthrow by Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān's son and political heir, Āghā Muḥammad Khān, passed unmourned.

In 1168/1755, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān added to his growing reputation by

defeating an Abdālī army near Sabzavār. Then in 1169/1756, he advanced towards Iṣfahān, defeated the troops of Karīm Khān Zand at Gulnābād, and occupied the former Safavid capital, where he had gold coins struck in his name. He then advanced to Shīrāz, only to turn back at the news that Āzād Khān was advancing from Āẕarbāījān. A complicated series of manoeuvres followed, in which Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān eventually made a triumphant progress through Gīlān, Ṭālish and across Āẕarbāījān to Āzād's stronghold of Urmīya, while Āzād fled into Ottoman territory. This year of 1170/1756–7 was the peak of his career, commemorated by gold coins struck as far apart as Tabrīz, where he left Āghā Muḥammad Khān as his deputy, and Yazd. By Rabīᶜ I-Rabīᶜ II 1171/December 1757, he was again in Iṣfahān, whence he set out for Shīrāz finally to defeat his Zand rival. But now his luck turned. The countryside around Shīrāz had been laid waste, so that his army lacked forage, while Karīm Khān, safe behind the walls of Shīrāz, refused to give battle. Eventually, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān was compelled to retreat (Shawwāl 1171/July 1758), with Karīm Khān's most skilful general, Shaikh ᶜAlī Khān, in pursuit. As he entered Māzandarān to seek refuge in Astarābād, he was hampered by treachery among his own followers, especially Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Develū, and was forced to give battle in the least favourable circumstances. Always a courageous fighter, in the end he was struck down by a life-long foe, Muḥammad Khān of Savādkūh, as he tried to effect his escape (15 Jumādā 1172/12 February 1759).

Karīm Khān Zand subsequently entered Astarābād and seized the treasure there. He realized that he could not control this distant province without strong local backing and appointed the experienced Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Develū as beglerbegī. In thus elevating the Develū Qājārs, he assured the decline of their Qūyūnlū kin, but he left nothing to chance. Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān's eldest son, Āghā Muḥammad Khān, had escaped after his father's death, but was eventually captured and taken to captivity in Shīrāz, where he was later joined by his full-brother, Ḥusain Qulī Khān, and where his paternal aunt, Khadīja Begum, already a member of Karīm Khān's harem, proved an invaluable support. Two other sons, Murtaẓā Qulī Khān and Muṣṭafā Qulī Khān, were allowed to remain in Astarābād, because their mother was the sister of Karīm Khān's appointee as beglerbegī. Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān's remaining sons, Riẓā Qulī, Jaᶜfar Qulī, Mahdī Qulī and ᶜAlī Qulī (ᶜAbbās Qulī died about this time), were sent to Qazvīn, where they were confined to a family property, although Jaᶜfar Qulī and ᶜAlī Qulī were later permitted to join Āghā Muḥammad Khān in Shīrāz. Karīm Khān's treatment of his defeated rival's family was unusually humane for the period.

Āghā Muḥammad Khān remained almost twenty years a hostage in Shīrāz. Karīm Khān accorded him consideration and even sought his advice, acknowledging his skill in political matters. It was nonetheless a long and bitter exile, but it allowed Āghā Muḥammad to acquire an intimate knowledge of his hosts, and perhaps to foresee the divisions amongst the Zands which followed Karīm Khān's death. Moreover, he had, in Khadīja Begum, a confidante in Karīm Khān's harem, to keep him informed about court intrigue, and later help him to escape as soon as Karīm Khān died.

Karīm Khān sent Āghā Muḥammad Khān's brother, Ḥusain Qulī Khān, north again as ḥākim of Dāmghān (Shawwāl 1182/February 1769). It later proved disastrous for the maintenance of Zand control in Qūmis. With Āghā Muḥammad Khān a eunuch, Ḥusain Qulī Khān was next in line for leadership of the Qūyūnlū Qājārs; thus he was bound to act as a counterweight to the Develū Qājārs in the vicinity of the tribal homeland. Once established in Dāmghān, however, Ḥusain Qulī Khān, seeking vengeance against his late father's Develū and other foes, behaved with such ferocity that Karīm Khān was forced to intervene. He was finally murdered near Findarisk, east of Astarābād, by some Yamūt Türkmens with whom he was feuding (c. 1191/1777). By then, his wife, an ʿIzz al-Dīnlū Qājār, had given birth to Fatḥ ʿAlī (the future Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh), as well as another son, also named Ḥusain Qulī.

On 13 Ṣafar 1193/1 March 1779, Karīm Khān died and Āghā Muḥammad Khān escaped from Shīrāz to Māzandarān. These two events mark the end of an epoch. During the half century of turbulent history which separated the elevation of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān as *Vakīl al-Daula* of Ṭahmāsp II in 1138–39/1726, from Āghā Muḥammad Khān's return to his homeland, the history of the Qājārs had been one of struggle. This was partly the result of their own internecine rivalries and partly the result of the recognition, first by the Afsharids and then by the Zands, that the Qājārs posed a serious threat to their own ambitions. Yet for a brief period between 1164–5/1751 and 1172–3/1759, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān had nearly acquired control over wide areas of northern, western and central Iran, and seems to have behaved as more than a mere tribal khan. He apparently obtained part of Nādir's treasure after 1159–60/1747, which must have enabled him to rule in some opulence. At Ashraf, where he held court, he repaired the Safavid palace and engaged in various public works: a bridge over the Bābul, for example, and a mosque at Bārfarūsh. He also struck coins, evidence of a claim to sovereignty. Hence, when Āghā Muḥammad Khān began, in 1192–3/1779, the process whereby he eventually brought all Iran under his control, he was not so much aspiring to new goals as fulfilling those of his father.

Unlike Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, however, Āghā Muḥammad Khān solved the two problems which led to his father's downfall: the self-destructive rivalry of the leading Qājār clans, and the acquisition of a broad base of support from among the northern and north-western tribes which could off-set the strength of the tribes of the south and south-west. The solution of these two problems enabled him to achieve the political consolidation which had eluded his immediate predecessors – Ghilzais, Afsharids, Zands, and his own father – since the fall of the Safavid kingdom.

ĀGHĀ MUḤAMMAD KHĀN QĀJĀR: THE CONSOLIDATION OF POWER (1193–1204/1779–89)

Āghā Muḥammad Khān's career may be divided into four phases. First, his early years and confinement in Shīrāz, which ended in 1193/1779, when he was thirty-seven. Secondly, a period of about six years from 1193/1779 to 1199–1200/1785, during which he consolidated his power-base in the Alburz region and extended his control over much of northern and north-western Iran, in competition with ᶜAlī Murād Khān Zand. The third phase, between 1199–1200/1785 and 1208–9/1794, began with the wresting of ᶜIrāq-i ᶜAjam (central Iran), from the Zands, and ended with the conquest of Fārs and Kirmān, and the death of Luṭf ᶜAlī Khān Zand. In the fourth phase, between 1208–9/1794 and 1211–12/1797, Āghā Muḥammad Khān, now master of the greater part of the Iranian plateau and of the territory formerly controlled by the Zands, ravaged the erstwhile Safavid province of Gurjistān (Georgia) in response to the intransigence of its ruler, proclaimed himself Shah, and conquered Khurāsān. At the time of his death, he was planning campaigns against Herat, Bukhārā, or possibly Baghdad.

In 1192–3/1779, Āghā Muḥammad Khān had long been absent from his native province. After escaping from Shīrāz, he met the leading Develū khans in the Varāmīn district and healed the ancient family feud which had been a major cause of the Qājārs' misfortunes. He then visited the shrine of Shāh ᶜAbd al-ᶜAẓīm, where his father's skull was buried, and from there entered Māzandarān. He first had to establish his authority among his Qūyūnlū brothers and half-brothers. Two, in particular, Riżā Qulī and Murtażā Qulī, challenged him, but in a battle fought on 15 Rabīᶜ I 1193/2 April 1779, he routed them and took Māzandarān. Murtażā Qulī, however, withdrew to Astarābād, where he consolidated his position. Āghā Muḥammad Khān could not dislodge him and had to tread warily, since a conflict with Murtażā Qulī, whose mother was a Develū, would threaten the fragile alliance he had achieved between the Qūyūnlū and

Develū clans. Also, a more immediate threat presented itself: a combined Zand-Afghan army sent by ʿAlī Murād Khān Zand and commanded by Maḥmūd Khān, son of Āzād Khān Afghānī. Āghā Muḥammad's loyal brother, Jaʿfar Qulī, led the Qājārs against this force and repulsed it. Āghā Muḥammad's hold on Māzandarān was temporarily secure.

He now established himself at Bārfarūsh (Bābul), with Fatḥ ʿAlī and Ḥusain Qulī, sons of his late brother, Ḥusain Qulī, towards whom he was already displaying marked favour. Shortly after, his brother, Riżā Qulī, resentful that he lacked an apanage, led a band of Lāhījānīs against Bārfarūsh, seized the palace and captured Āghā Muḥammad Khān. When the news reached Astarābād, Murtażā Qulī raised a force of Qājārs and Türkmens, marched on Sārī and released Āghā Muḥammad Khān. Riżā Qulī Khān and Āghā Muḥammad were reconciled, but the former, still dissatisfied, fled to the feuding Zands. At first, he sought help from ʿAlī Murād Khān in Iṣfahān, then from Ṣādiq Khān in Shīrāz, but neither realized his hopes, and he eventually died in Khurāsān. His former supporters joined Āghā Muḥammad Khān and were employed against Murtażā Qulī Khān, who now hoped to capture Māzandarān, but Āghā Muḥammad Khān's troops defeated him in a succession of engagements, and thereafter the two brothers reached an understanding: Murtażā Qulī Khān's position was confirmed as *de facto* ruler of Astarābād and he was granted the revenue of several districts in Māzandarān.

These Qājār squabbles, and the gradual emergence of Āghā Muḥammad Khān as sole ruler of Māzandarān, provoked ʿAlī Murād Khān Zand into attempting to invade that province, but Āghā Muḥammad Khān advanced from Bārfarūsh with a force of Qājār cavalry and Māzandarānī *tufangchīs* (musketeers) to drive the invaders back towards Tehran. He then occupied all Qūmis and appointed governors in Simnān, Dāmghān, Shāhrūd and Bisṭām. These actions south of the Alburz enhanced his prestige and provided plunder and assignments with which to reward his followers, especially his numerous siblings. Thus, ʿAlī Qulī Khān, who had assisted him in the conquest of Qūmis, was given Simnān as a *soyūrghāl*, a land grant in lieu of salary or pension.[7] Āghā Muḥammad returned to Astarābād to renew the various agreements already made with Murtażā Qulī Khān and other members of his family.

In the same year, 1195/1781, Āghā Muḥammad Khān for the first time encountered the Russians. The Russian government, interested in opening a direct trade-route with India, had sent Count Voinovich to establish a "factory"

[7] See chapter 13, p. 489, for further discussion of this and related terms.

on the south-eastern shores of the Caspian. The Count appeared with a flotilla off the coast of Gurgān and applied for permission to establish a trading-post at Ashraf, then a favourite residence of Āghā Muḥammad Khān, rebuilt in 1193/1779 on his return from Shīrāz. Āghā Muḥammad Khān refused this request, but Voinovich proceeded to establish a temporary settlement at Qaraduvin and on the off-shore Āshūrāda islands. Lacking a fleet, Āghā Muḥammad Khān could not prevent this, but was determined that the occupation should not become permanent. He persuaded the Russian commander and his officers to visit him in Astarābād, where they were seized and held hostage until Voinovich sent orders to his men on Āshūrāda to dismantle the buildings and leave.

This experience with the Russians may have prompted Āghā Muḥammad Khān's decision to invade Gīlān in 1196/1782 since its ruler, Hidāyat-Allāh Khān, seemed to welcome contacts with Russian traders, who frequented the bazaars of Enzeli and Rasht. Āghā Muḥammad Khān regarded the Russian presence in Gīlān with suspicion and had other reasons for marching into Gīlān. It was a flourishing province. Its ruler drew substantial revenue from the silk industry and sea trade with Russia. Hidāyat-Allāh Khān's accumulation of treasure doubtless provoked Āghā Muḥammad Khān's greed. He also had a grievance against the khan. Originally appointed ruler of Gīlān by Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār, Hidāyat-Allāh Khān had betrayed the Qājār cause and become a client of the Zands.

The Qājār troops met with no resistance on entering Gīlān, while Hidāyat-Allāh Khān made a show of compliance by sending two emissaries, Mīrzā Ṣādiq, his *munajjim-bāshī* (chief astrologer) and Āghā Ṣādiq of Lāhījān, to sue for favourable terms. But Hidāyat-Allāh Khān did not trust Āghā Muḥammad Khān and left Gīlān by sea for Shīrvān. The Qājār army plundered Rasht and Āghā Muḥammad secured ample treasure. His followers could be richly rewarded. Elated by victory, he sent his brother, Jaʿfar Qulī Khān, to conquer Khamsa, the region south of the Alburz extending westwards from Qazvīn to the borders of Āẕarbāījān, with Zanjān as its administrative centre. Jaʿfar Qulī Khān defeated a Zand force in the vicinity of Ray or Karaj and occupied Qazvīn. He then proceeded to Zanjān, soon capturing that city. Āghā Muḥammad Khān joined him at Sulṭānīya, with the rest of the army from Gīlān. During the following years, however, Hidāyat-Allāh Khān re-established himself without difficulty as ruler of Gīlan, while the Qājārs were occupied elsewhere.

Between Khamsa to the west, and Qūmis to the east, lay the country around Tehran which had long served as a Zand outpost, threatening the Qājār homelands in Māzandarān and Gurgān. During 1197/1783, therefore, Āghā

Muḥammad Khān decided to eliminate this menace by besieging Tehran and evicting its garrison, but without success. Plague first swept the town, and then the besiegers' camp, so that he had to march his ailing troops off towards ʿAlī Bulāgh (Chashma ʿAlī), near Dāmghān.

In the following year, 1198/1784, Āghā Muḥammad Khān met the greatest challenge of his career so far. Five years had passed since his flight from Shīrāz, and in that time he had done much to end the feuds which had hitherto hindered Qājār ambitions. Not only had he asserted his authority among his kinsmen, but had gained control of both the northern and southern foothills of the Alburz, apart from the environs of Tehran. His threat to Zand control of the plateau could not be ignored. ʿAlī Murād Khān Zand, in retaliation for the Qājārs' attack on Tehran the previous year, sent a large army to Māzandarān under the command of his son, Shaikh Vais Khān. The notables of Māzandarān hastened to submit, while Āghā Muḥammad Khān, abandoned by all but a handful of followers, retreated to Astarābād, where he strengthened the fortifications. Murtażā Qulī Khān, fearing that his property in Māzandarān was being ravaged by the invaders, and probably considering Āghā Muḥammad Khān's position hopeless, joined the Zands. Apparently encouraged by this defection, ʿAlī Murād Khān sent additional forces into Māzandarān to advance against Astarābād. The Zand troops, under the command of Muḥammad Ẓāhir Khān, a kinsman of ʿAlī Murād Khān, laid siege to Astarābād, but neglected their lines of communication. In Astarābād, Āghā Muḥammad Khān had prepared plentiful supplies. Daily skirmishing below the walls devastated the surrounding countryside so that the Zands needed supplies from Māzandarān, but Āghā Muḥammad Khān sent out raiding parties to attack the inadequately guarded route along which the Zands' provisions had to come. When the besiegers' plight was desperate, Āghā Muḥammad Khān sallied out from behind his walls and dispersed them. Muḥammad Ẓāhir Khān fled towards the Qara-Qum, was captured by the Qājārs' Yamūt allies, and was handed over to Āghā Muḥammad Khān for execution. Few Zand soldiers found their way back to Māzandarān, and Āghā Muḥammad Khān's forces were soon in hot pursuit. Near Ashraf, he defeated the dispersed the principal Zand garrison in Māzandarān and pressed on to Sārī, the capital. By the beginning of 1199/November 1784, Māzandarān was free of the invaders. ʿAlī Murād Khān raised fresh troops and sent them north under the command of his cousin, Rustam Khān Zand, but they were repulsed by a Qājār army commanded by Jaʿfar Qulī Khān. ʿAlī Murād Khān died not long after, on 1 Rabīʿ II 1199/11 February 1785. As soon as Āghā Muḥammad Khān heard the news, he ordered his troops to advance on Tehran.

Outside Tehran, Āghā Muḥammad Khān prepared for a siege, but there then occurred an incident highly indicative of the prevailing attitude of the times. During the preceding fifteen years, Tehran, which was strongly walled, had changed hands on a number of occasions, but had remained a bastion of Zand hegemony in the north. At the approach of Āghā Muḥammad Khān's army, the Tehranis closed their gates and sent out a message to the effect that, since Jaʿfar Khān Zand was now ruler in Iṣfahān, they regarded him as their sovereign and were his obedient servants, adding, however, that they would obey whomsoever actually occupied the throne. Āghā Muḥammad Khān was thus to understand that were he to defeat Jaʿfar Khān, these people would acknowledge him as their sovereign. He immediately set off for Iṣfahān. Jaʿfar Khān Zand sent troops to intercept him, but they turned back at Qum without giving battle. A larger Zand force then advanced as far as Kāshān, only to be defeated at Nuṣratābād, north-west of the city. As soon as news of this disaster reached Jaʿfar Khān Zand, he fled to Shīrāz. Āghā Muḥammad Khān entered Iṣfahān, where he found the remaining Zand treasure, and the khan's harem. The Qājār army plundered the city, still the largest and probably the richest in the country.

During the summer of 1199/1785, Āghā Muḥammad Khān made Iṣfahān his base while he dealt with ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam, enforcing the submission of Aḥmad Khān, another son of Āzād Khān Afghānī, who had been Zand commander at Nuṣratābād, and that of the Bakhtiyārī Khāns. In Iṣfahān, he appointed a beglerbegī who had held the same office under ʿAlī Murād Khān Zand and who, at the latter's death, had proclaimed himself Shah until imprisoned by Jaʿfar Khān Zand. Āghā Muḥammad Khān released him and, judging him reliable, reappointed him. Having made these arrangements, he left for Tehran; he had proved himself worthy of the Tehranis' obedience by deposing Jaʿfar Khān Zand and capturing the former capital of the kingdom. The Pazukī Kurdish chieftain, Majnūn Khān, was sent ahead to receive the city's submission, while the main army moved westwards to Hamadān, where a number of Kurdish and Turkish tribal chieftains submitted or renewed allegiance formerly given.

Āghā Muḥammad Khān entered Tehran, which was henceforth to be the Qājār capital, on 11 Jumādā I 1200/12 March 1786. From this time, he seems to have regarded himself as ruler of Iran, although he refrained from assuming the title of Shah.

Jaʿfar Khān Zand still ruled in Shīrāz, and once he had ascertained that Āghā Muḥammad Khān was back in the north, he marched on Iṣfahān. An attempt to defend the city by the Qājār beglerbegī failed and following its capture, a Zand governor was appointed. Detachments were sent forward to occupy Kāshān and

Qum, while Jaᶜfar Khān himself took the road to Hamadān. Here, however, an alliance of local tribal leaders, including Khusrau Khān, the Vālī of Ardalān and Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Qarāgūzlū, attacked and defeated him. Jaᶜfar Khān Zand retired to Iṣfahān. By now, however, Āghā Muḥammad Khān had learnt of the loss of Iṣfahān, and was rapidly marching southwards. Jaᶜfar Khān abandoned Iṣfahān a second time and fell back upon Shīrāz. Āghā Muḥammad Khān reoccupied Iṣfahān without difficulty, appointed his brother, Jaᶜfar Qulī Khān, as beglerbegī, left him with a strong garrison, and then marched in the direction of Gulpāygān to receive the formal submission of the Vālī of Ardalān. Khusrau Khān. The latter had followed his tribal alliance's rout of Jaᶜfar Khān Zand by advancing as far as Malāʾir, and thence to Gulpāygān. Here they halted and Khusrau Khān sent all the booty and prisoners taken in the recent battle near Hamadān to Āghā Muḥammad Khān, with a letter of submission. Āghā Muḥammad Khān acknowledged the Vālī's homage and sent him gifts and the grant of the districts of Sunqur and Kullīaʾī. The submission of so important a chieftain was a notable event. From this year, 1200/1786, the alliance, initiated long before in the lifetime of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār, between the Qājār dynasty and the Vālīs of Ardalān, was reinforced by periodical dynastic marriages.

News of a revolt by the governor of Zanjān now forced Āghā Muḥammad Khān to turn north again. The rebellious governor was pardoned and Āghā Muḥammad Khān made a triumphal entry into Tehran, but Gīlān was requiring his attention. Since the Qājārs' first invasion in 1196–7/1782, Hidāyat-Allāh Khān had returned to his province, apparently with Russian assistance. Āghā Muḥammad Khān considered the whole Caspian coast to be threatened by Hidāyat-Allāh Khān's dalliance with the Russians. He was not himself averse to allowing Russian merchants to trade in his territory. He did so at Mashhad-i Sar in Māzandarān, but their movements were strictly regulated and he was determined not to grant them privileged status or special concessions, as Hidāyat-Allāh Khān had done. He had not forgotten the Voinovich affair of 1195–6/1781. In any case, Hidāyat-Allāh Khān's return to Rasht was an open challenge to Qājār hegemony in the north and in itself, sufficient cause for war. Fortunately for Āghā Muḥammad Khān, Hidāyat-Allāh had many enemies; he had for years participated in the feuds characteristic of the ruling families in Gīlān.

The second invasion of Gīlān in 1200/1786 proved as easy as the first. Such support as Hidāyat-Allāh Khān had previously enjoyed melted away. On the march to Rasht, Āghā Muḥammad enlisted in his service Mahdī Beg Khalᶜatbarī, ruler of Tunakābun, a former appointee of Karīm Khān Zand along

with other defectors. The Russian consul in Gīlān, supposedly an ally of Hidāyat-Allāh Khān, betrayed him by supplying the Qājārs with arms. Recognizing the futility of further resistance, Hidāyat-Allāh Khān boarded a Russian ship at Enzeli, bound for Shīrvān or Lankarān, but was handed over to Āghā ᶜAlī of Shaft (or, according to a different source, another local ruler with whom he was feuding), who killed him to avenge the massacre of his family some years before. Gīlān was now absorbed into the Qājār kingdom. Āghā Muḥammad Khān did not regard the Russian settlements at Rasht or Enzeli as sacrosanct. The local Russian officials had shown themselves to be treacherous in their dealings with the late Hidāyat-Allāh Khān; no doubt Āghā Muḥammad Khān was shrewd enough to assess the value of their friendship, despite their protestations of good will. Apart from the actual annexation of the province, the most important gain was the great treasure found in the late ruler's palace. Enough is known of Āghā Muḥammad Khān's character for it to be evident that this would mean more to him than the friendship of unreliable Russian officials. In any event, an aspiring Iranian conqueror needed gold with which to bind men to his service and recruit fresh followers.

It is clear that 1199–1200/1785–6 was Āghā Muḥammad Khān's *annus mirabilis*. During that period, he had gained control of ᶜIrāq-i ᶜAjam, Iṣfahān, Tehran and Gīlān, had driven the Zand ruler, Jaᶜfar Khān, back to Shīrāz, and, in all but name, had became Shah. A period of relative inactivity followed these triumphs before Āghā Muḥammad Khān turned south again. Meanwhile, Jaᶜfar Khān Zand moved into the Kūhgīlūya country and occupied Bihbahān, while sending Zand troops to Muḥammara, later named Khurramshahr, to punish the Banū Kaᶜb for disloyalty. After celebrating Naurūz in 1201/1787 in Bihbahān, he returned in triumph to Shirāz, where he learnt that the governor of Yazd, Taqī Khān, had revolted. He gathered as large a force as possible and moved to Yazd, where Taqī Khān was strengthening the city's fortifications. Taqī Khān also applied to the ruler of Ṭabas, Amīr Muḥammad Khān, for assistance. The Zand army was soon encamped below the walls of Yazd, but, after several assaults had been repulsed, the unexpected arrival of the Khān of Ṭabas and his troops induced panic among the besiegers, whose army dispersed, leaving Amīr Muḥammad Khān to plunder the Zand camp at his leisure. He obtained a vast booty which included Jaᶜfar Khān's tents, baggage and the entire siege-train.

Amīr Muḥammad Khān with his followers and some of Taqī Khān's, the Zand artillery and the wealth obtained from Jaᶜfar Khān's camp, now took the road to Iṣfahān, recruiting additional cavalry from the districts of Kūhpāya, Nāʾīn, and Ārdistān en route. The governor of Iṣfahān, Jaᶜfar Qulī Khān,

probably expected an attack by Jaʿfar Khān Zand from the south; not one from the east by an obscure ruler in the Dasht-i Lūt. Nevertheless, he quickly marched out against Amīr Muḥammad Khān, scattered his troops and seized his train and artillery. At this juncture Āghā Muḥammad Khān decided to head southwards. He joined his brother in Iṣfahān in 1202/1788, despatched his nephew, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān to obtain the submission of Taqī Khān in Yazd, and set off himself to chastise the Qashqāʾī, who withdrew into the mountains to avoid a battle. However, the Qājār army pressed on to within sixty-five miles of Shīrāz. Āghā Muḥammad Khān probably hoped to lure Jaʿfar Khān Zand from behind his formidable walls and bring him to battle. But Jaʿfar Khān would not be drawn, and Āghā Muḥammad Khān returned to Iṣfahān where, having replaced Jaʿfar Qulī Khān with his youngest brother, ʿAlī Qulī Khān, he was rejoined by Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, who had defeated Taqī Khān of Yazd. Āghā Muḥammad Khān then set off for Tehran.

With Āghā Muḥammad Khān having gone north again, Jaʿfar Khān Zand began to prepare yet another expedition against Iṣfahān. ʿAlī Qulī Khān, learning of this, sent a force of Qarāgūzlū tribesman to hold Qumishah, but the advancing Zand army worsted them. ʿAlī Qulī Khān thereupon withdrew to Kāshān, leaving Iṣfahān open to Jaʿfar Khān Zand. This was a serious set-back for the Qājārs, and Āghā Muḥammad Khān advanced by forced marches from Tehran to Iṣfahān, causing Jaʿfar Khān to flee back to Shīrāz. Qājār rule was re-established in Iṣfahān, but Āghā Muḥammad withdrew to Tehran again, as if not yet confident that he could succeed against Jaʿfar Khān on his own ground and in so hostile a countryside as Fārs. But on 25 Rabīʿ II 1203/23 January 1789, Jaʿfar Khān was assassinated. A four-month civil war followed in which various contenders among the Zand ruling family competed for the succession. This struggle ended with Luṭf ʿAlī Khān's triumphant entry into Shīrāz in Shaʿban-Ramaḍān 1203/May 1789. Āghā Muḥammad Khān seems to have considered that, Jaʿfar Khan having been replaced by the inexperienced Luṭf ʿAlī Khān, the time had come to eliminate the Zands.

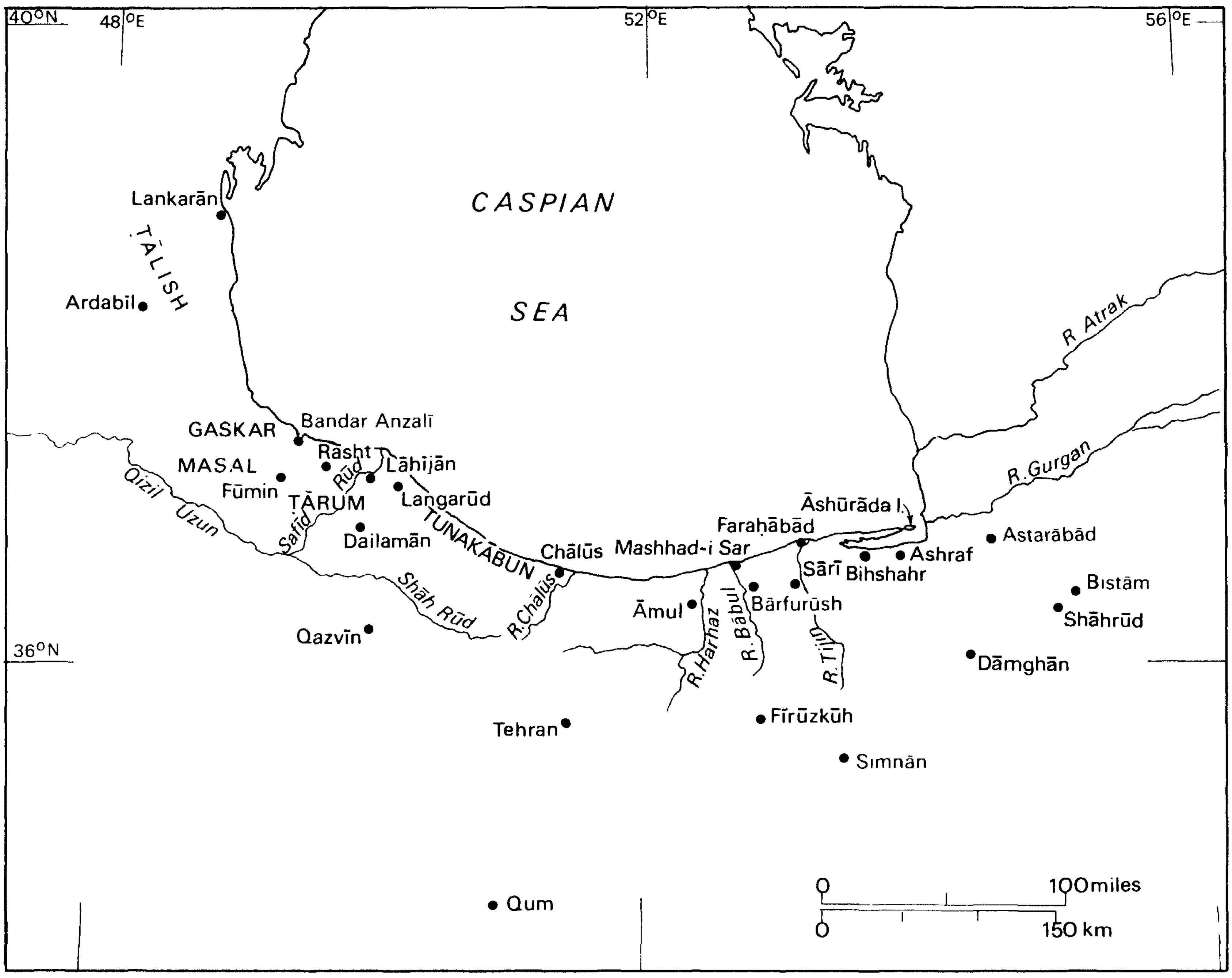
THE STRUGGLE WITH LUṬF ʿALĪ KHĀN ZAND

Āghā Muḥammad Khān now advanced on Shīrāz. When he was about eight miles north-west of the city, Luṭf ʿAlī Khān intercepted him. An inconclusive battle was fought on 12 Shawwāl 1203/25 June 1789. Luṭf ʿAlī Khān withdrew into Shīrāz, where Āghā Muḥammad Khān besieged him until 18 Dhuʾl-Ḥijja/7 September. He then struck camp and returned to Tehran, where he remained

until the following Naurūz. On 3 Ramaḍān 1204/17 May 1790, he again set out for Shīrāz. In western Fārs, the governor of Bihbahān submitted to him, but Luṭf ʿAlī Khān responded by again leading his troops out of Shīrāz. This time no confrontation occurred. Āghā Muḥammad withdrew to the north-west to settle the affairs of Qazvīn and Khamsa, while Luṭf ʿAlī Khān unsuccessfully attacked Kirmān. An incident then occurred which may have determined Āghā Muḥammad Khān's later attitudes to those around him. There was hitherto little in Āghā Muḥammad Khān's career to suggest that he was more ferocious or brutal than his contemporaries. Hitherto, his staunchest supporter had been his brother, Jaʿfar Qulī Khān, who had apparently assumed that he would eventually succeed Āghā Muḥammad Khān as head of the Qājār tribe, but who was becoming restless since he had not been formally designated heir. Moreover, Āghā Muḥammad Khān obviously favoured his nephew, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, son of the late Ḥusain Qulī Khān. A quarrel arose between the brothers, and Āghā Muḥammad Khān ordered Jaʿfar Qulī Khān's execution (1205/1790–1). Āghā Muḥammad Khān presumably considered his brother's death a necessity, since he was aware, from his familiarity with Zand family rivalries, how a dynasty could disintegrate through fratricidal conflict.

The news of Luṭf ʿAlī Khān's failure at Kirmān allowed Āghā Muḥammad to concentrate on the problems of Āẕarbāījān. He appointed Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān beglerbegī of ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam as far as the northern border of Fārs, and advanced into Āẕarbāījān in the spring of 1206/1791. He halted at Ṭārum on the Safīd Rūd and sent his close relative and confidant, Sulaimān Khān Qūyūnlū, to subjugate Ṭālish. Meanwhile, he himself moved on to Sarāb, where the governor, Ṣādiq Khān, chief of the Shaqāqī Kurds, had shown hostility. From there he proceeded to Ardabīl to visit the shrine, and then entered Qarājadāgh, where he destroyed all opposition, and appointed the Dunbulī Kurdish chieftain, Ḥusain Qulī, governor of Khūy and Tabrīz.

While Āghā Muḥammad Khān was pacifying the north-west, important events had occurred in the south. Luṭf ʿAlī Khān Zand and his troops had marched north to attack Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, who was encamped at Qumishah, and advanced on Iṣfahān. Taking advantage of Luṭf ʿAlī Khān's departure, Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm, the *kalāntar* of Fārs, seized Shīrāz, while his brother staged a mutiny among Luṭf ʿAlī Khān's troops. Luṭf ʿAlī Khān hurried back to Shīrāz, only to find its gates closed to him, and his officers' families held hostage in the citadel. He thereupon withdrew into the mountains between Kāzarūn and the Persian Gulf, where he gathered sufficient forces to attempt the recapture of Shīrāz. Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm apparently staged this *coup* with no further end in view than to



Map 3. Gīlān, Māzandarān and Gurgān during the lifetime of Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār

expel the Zands and establish control over Shīrāz, but Luṭf ᶜAlī Khān's resilience necessitated a change of plan. Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm sent an envoy to Āghā Muḥammad Khān, then in Khamsa returning from Āzarbāījān, offering a gift of 3,000 mares, formerly Zand property, and requesting on behalf of the people of Fārs that he become their ruler. For Āghā Muḥammad Khān, this was an unanticipated opportunity to bring about both the conquest of Fārs and the final destruction of the Zands. He promptly accepted the offer, appointed Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm beglerbegī in Fārs, despatched an officer to Shīrāz to seize Zand property there and bring Luṭf ᶜAlī Khān's family to Tehran, and ordered Fatḥ ᶜAlī Khān to have troops stationed in Ābāda ready to assist Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm if necessary.

Meanwhile, Luṭf ᶜAlī Khān had defeated the troops sent against him by Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm and had seized the fort at Kāzarūn. He had advanced to the vicinity of Shīrāz and was preparing to starve his former capital into submission. Inside the city, Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm found that some of the tribal levies, while willing to acquiesce in the removal of Luṭf ᶜAlī Khān, had expected his replacement by another Zand. Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm was too far committed against the late ruling house to be

able to compromise on this issue. He disarmed troops still loyal to the Zands by a ruse and expelled them from the city. They promptly joined Luṭf ʿAlī Khān's forces, but their lack of weapons made them less useful than would otherwise have been the case. Nevertheless, Luṭf ʿAlī Khān began to gain ground again, being in control of virtually all the districts around Shīrāz. He attempted negotiation with Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm, even offering to retire with his family, now in the latter's hands, to India or Ottoman territory. Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm rejected these terms and sent a message to Ābāda, requesting that Qājār troops come to Shīrāz by a circuitous route. These beat off the first Zand troops sent against them, but were defeated when Luṭf ʿAlī Khān took the field in person. Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm remained safe in Shīrāz, but Luṭf ʿAlī Khān held the surrounding countryside.

As soon as Āghā Muḥammad Khān learnt that the troops from Ābāda had suffered a reverse and that Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm's situation was desperate, he sent 7,000 horsemen, together with the remaining forces at Ābāda, to join the Ḥājjī. Luṭf ʿAlī Khān allowed these reinforcements to reach Shīrāz, probably (as the historian Fasāʾī suggests) anticipating that once the garrison was strengthened, it would emerge from the city and could be destroyed in open battle. He was correct in this, for shortly afterwards an engagement was fought to the west of Shīrāz, and he triumphed over the combined forces of Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm and his Qājār auxiliaries. This was late in 1205–6/1791, or early in 1206–7/1792. The Shīrāzīs were now suffering severely from the siege, and it was doubtful whether they could hold out. Much of Fārs was devastated by the fighting, and for three or four years locusts had plagued the countryside. Although Luṭf ʿAlī Khān's troops suffered almost as much as those of Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm, some of the latter were beginning to defect to the Zands. Āghā Muḥammad Khān therefore mustered as large a force as possible and himself advanced into Fārs. On 14 Shawwāl 1206/5 June 1792, Luṭf ʿAlī Khān, with a handful of troops, made a desperate night attack on Āghā Muḥammad Khān's camp near Persepolis. It seemed successful: Luṭf ʿAlī Khān was assured that the Qājārs were routed. Elated by this success, he allowed his troops to scatter and rested for the night, only to discover at first light that Āghā Muḥammad Khān still held the field. He then fled, via Nirīz and Kirmān, to Ṭabas.

Āghā Muḥammad Khān entered Shīrāz on 1 Dhuʾl-Ḥijja 1207/21 July 1792 and remained there for a month, holding court in the Bāgh-i Vakīl (cf. p. 906). Before leaving for Tehran (11 Muḥarram 1207/29 August 1792) he confirmed Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm as beglerbegī of Fārs and exhumed the body of Karīm Khān Zand to be sent to Tehran with gates of the Vakīl's palace. He also carried off surviving members of the Zand family. In the spring of the following year, he

returned to Shīrāz, and asserted his hold over the city more brutally. Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm and other supporters of the Qājārs were granted titles and favours, but all the notables of the province, including Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm, were compelled to surrender women and children as hostages. He also ordered the destruction of the citadel and the outer walls of Shīrāz before leaving for Tehran on 14 Muḥarram 1208/23 August 1793.

While Āghā Muḥammad Khān consolidated his hold over Fārs, Luṭf ʿAlī Khān was still a fugitive. From Ṭabas, with the assistance of the local khan, he marched on Yazd and dispersed such forces as opposed him there. He then captured Abarqūh, where he left a garrison, and moved on to Dārāb. A pursuing Qājār army wasted time besieging Abarqūh, and then marched via Sarvistān, towards Nirīz, where Luṭf ʿAlī Khān was known to be. For some eleven days, the two forces skirmished inconclusively, but eventally Luṭf ʿAlī Khān's men, wearying of the struggle, began to desert. Luṭf ʿAlī Khān returned to Ṭabas and then set out for Qandahar, presumably to seek assistance from the Durrānī ruler, Tīmūr Shāh; at Qāʾin, however, he learnt that the latter had recently died. He then went south to Narmashīr and Bam, where two local khans offered to co-operate with him. With this additional support, he captured Kirmān in Shaʿbān 1208/March 1794, was proclaimed *Pādishāh* and struck coins.

Āghā Muḥammad Khān now mobilized all his available forces for a campaign against Kirmān. He left Tehran on 3 Shawwāl 1208/4 May 1794 for Fārs, and was joined north of Qum by Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm and the notables of the province. From there, he advanced to Kirmān, where Luṭf ʿAlī Khān conducted a skilful defence, defeating the Qājār advance guard. About this time, it seems that Āghā Muḥammad Khān's frustration over the Zands began to give way to acts of irrational violence. It was said that on one occasion, catching sight of a coin struck in Luṭf ʿAlī Khān's name, he immediately ordered that Luṭf ʿAlī Khān's captive son, Fatḥ-Allāh, be castrated. Luṭf ʿAlī Khān held out in Kirmān for four months, but the morale of his troops steadily deteriorated. Finally, on 29 Rabīʿ I 1209/24 October 1794, a traitor opened the gates of the citadel, the besiegers overran the city, and Luṭf ʿAlī Khān fled to Bam. Āghā Muḥammad Khān, enraged at his escape, ordered that all male prisoners be killed or blinded, and the women and children handed over to his troops as slaves. Kirmān, systematically plundered and devastated, did not recover before the 20th century. In Bam, Luṭf ʿAlī Khān was betrayed by his host and handed over to Āghā Muḥammad Khān, who ordered him to be raped by his slaves, blinded and taken to Tehran, where he was tortured to death.

While Āghā Muḥammad Khān was besieging Kirmān, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān had

been asserting Qājār authority throughout the sparsely populated Kirmān province by means of a circuitous march through Bam, Narmashīr, Jīruft, the country north of Bandar ʿAbbās and Lāristān. At the beginning of Jumādā I 1209/November 1794, both uncle and nephew were back in Shīrāz, and in Jumādā II 1209/December–January 1794–5, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān was appointed beglerbegī of Fārs, Kirmān and Yazd, with the title of *Jahānbānī*, formerly held by Luṭf ʿAlī Khān. The loyal notables of Fārs were rewarded for their support and the members of the new beglerbegī's household and administration were named. Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm was appointed grand vizier with the title of *Iʿtimād al-Daula*.

EXPANSION INTO GEORGIA AND KHURĀSĀN

Āghā Muḥammad Khān could now turn to the restoration of the outlying provinces of the Safavid kingdom. Returning to Tehran in the spring of 1209/1795, he assembled a force of some 60,000 cavalry and infantry and in Shawwāl–Dhuʾl-Qaʿda/May, set off for Āẕarbāījān, intending to conquer the country between the rivers Aras and Kura, formerly under Safavid control. This region comprised a number of independent khanates of which the most important was Qarābāgh, with its capital at Shūsha; Ganja, with its capital of the same name; Shīrvān across the Kura, with its capital at Shamākhī; and to the north-west, on both banks of the Kura, Christian Georgia (Gurjistān), with its capital at Tiflis. As he approached the Aras, Āghā Muḥammad divided his force into three. The left wing was sent in the direction of Erivan, the right advanced parallel to the Caspian shore into the Mughān steppe and across the lower Aras into Shīrvān and Dāghistān. The centre, under Āghā Muḥammad Khān himself, advanced towards the fortress of Shūsha. Ibrāhīm Khān, ruler of Qarābāgh, had long anticipated such an attack. He had not only strengthened his capital but assembled a strong force to halt the Qājār. He endeavoured to block Āghā Muḥammad Khān's advance with this army, but was defeated and forced to withdraw behind the walls of Shūsha, pursued by the Qājār vanguard. Āghā Muḥammad Khān then moved forward with the main part of the army, and the siege of Shūsha began. It lasted from 20 Dhuʾl-Ḥijja 1209/8 July 1795 until 23 Muḥarram 1210/9 August 1795, and although Ibrāhīm Khān's allies from Bākū and elsewhere defected and made peace with Āghā Muḥammad Khān, his own troops resisted vigorously. Both sides desired a settlement, and Ibrāhīm Khān eventually decided to submit to Āghā Muḥammad Khān, to pay regular tribute and to surrender hostages, although the Qājārs were still denied entry into

Shūsha. Ibrāhīm Khān retained his enmity towards the Qājārs, as subsequent events would prove, but since the main objective of the campaign was the conquest of Georgia, Āghā Muḥammad Khān was prepared to negotiate, to open the road to Tiflis.

Much had happened in Georgia since the fall of the Safavids. Recently, on 23 Shaʿbān 1197/24 July 1783, Erekle (Heraclius), the ruler of Kartli and Kakheti (the central core of the Georgian kingdom) and Catherine II of Russia had signed the Treaty of Georgievsk which made Georgia a Russian protectorate. In it, Erekle specifically renounced Georgia's former dependence upon Iran, while another article of the Treaty allowed the stationing of Russian troops in Georgia for mutual defence against Georgia's Ottoman and Iranian neighbours. Following the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War of 1787, however, the Russian garrisons had been withdrawn. Now, nearly a decade later, Erekle, having renounced his allegiance to Iran, found himself unprotected in the face of a resurgence of Iranian military power. Āghā Muḥammad Khān cannot have been ignorant of events in Georgia, or unaware of Russia's threatening presence beyond the Caucasus. His suspicions had been aroused by recent Russian activity in both Gīlān and Astarābād. This may explain part of the hostility he felt towards the Vālī of Georgia, although while the Zands were still undefeated he had remained ostensibly amicable. In 1200–1/1786, soon after the death of ʿAlī Murād Khān Zand, he received an envoy from Erekle, and offered the latter sovereignty over Āẕarbāījān, not then in his possession, if Erekle could obtain Russian backing for him in his conflict with the Zands. Five years later, his conquest of Āẕarbāījān in 1206/1791 raised apprehensions in Tiflis, and Erekle had applied to Saint Petersburg for assistance, in accordance with the terms of the Treaty of Georgievsk, although without result, since the Russian government was preoccupied elsewhere. As soon as Erekle heard of Āghā Muḥammad Khān's plans for a summer campaign across the Aras in 1210/1795, he sent an urgent request to Saint Petersburg for Russian aid. None was given, however, largely on the advice of General Ivan Gudovich, the commander of the Caucasian line, who did not take the threat seriously.

Meanwhile, Āghā Muḥammad Khān had left Shūsha and advanced on Ganja, where the ruler, Javād Khān, submitted. From there, he sent a threatening letter to Erekle. He reminded him that, under the Safavids, Georgia had been a part of Iran and demanded Erekle's immediate submission, assuring him that if he came to pay homage, he would be confirmed as Vālī. According to the author of the *Fārsnāma-yi Nāṣirī*, Āghā Muḥammad Khān declared, "Shah Esmāʿil Ṣafavi ruled over the province of Georgia. When in the days of the deceased king we

were engaged in conquering the provinces of Persia, we did not proceed to this region. As most of the provinces of Persia have come into our possession now, you must, according to ancient law, consider Georgia part of the empire and appear before our majesty. You have to confirm your obedience; then you may remain in the possession of your governorship. If you do not do this, you will be treated as the others."[8]

Erekle reacted by reaffirming his allegiance to Russia and summoning all the troops he could muster to Tiflis. Āghā Muḥammad Khān now left Ganja with 40,000 cavalry, having been joined by his original left and right wings. On 25 Ṣafar 1210/10 September 1795, the Qājār vanguard joined battle with the Georgians, commanded by Erekle's grandson, but was forced back. Then Āghā Muḥammad Khān and the main body of the army came up on the next day, and a decisive engagement took place outside Tiflis. The battle lasted a whole day. The Iranians were three times repulsed and Āghā Muḥammad Khān is said to have recited verses from the *Shāhnāma* of Firdausī to encourage his troops, who greatly outnumbered the enemy.[9] By nightfall, however, the Georgians had suffered heavy casualties and had retreated into the citadel of Tiflis. Later, what remained of the Vālī's army, and those inhabitants of Tiflis who could, abandoned the city.

Tiflis was systematically sacked, and after the devastation and massacre, 15,000 Georgian slaves, mostly women and children, were deported to Iran. An eye-witness, who entered the city shortly after the Iranian troops had withdrawn, described the pitiful sights he saw: "I therefore pursued my way, paved as it were, with carcases, and entered Tiflis by the gate of Tapitag: but what was my consternation on finding here the bodies of women and children slaughtered by the sword of the enemy; to say nothing of the men, of whom I saw more than a thousand, as I should suppose, lying dead in one little tower! The Shah had arrived at Handshu, on his way back to Tiflis, and was consequently but three versts off. In traversing the city to the gate of Handshu, I found not a living creature but two infirm old men, whom the enemy had treated with great cruelty, to make them confess where they had concealed their money and treasures. The city was almost entirely consumed, and still continued to smoke in different places; and the stench from the putrefying bodies, together with the heat which prevailed, was intolerable, and certainly infectious."[10]

Āghā Muḥammad Khān remained nine days in the vicinity of Tiflis. His victory proclaimed the restoration of Iranian military power in a region for-

[8] Ḥasan-i Fasā'ī, *Fārsnāma-yi Nāṣirī*, tr. Busse, p. 66. [9] Malcolm, *History* II, p. 284.
[10] Artemi, *Memoirs*, pp. 228–9.

merly under Safavid domination. Russia's client, Georgia, had been punished and Russia's prestige damaged. Across the Ottoman frontier, the Pashas of Kars and Erzerum sensed danger. But Āghā Muḥammad Khān did not stay to consolidate his victory. He turned back and marched down the valley of the Kura and, having ravaged the Khanate of Shīrvān, established his winter-quarters in the Mughān steppe. It was here at Javād, to the west of the confluence of the Kura and the Aras, that Nādir Shāh had held his coronation in 1148–9/1736, sixty years earlier.

Āghā Muḥammad Khān had hitherto refused the title of Shah, on the grounds that Iran was not entirely subject to his authority. Now, the Qājār chieftains and officers of state, headed by Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm, came and pressed him to take the title of Shah before marching on Mashhad and bringing the former Safavid province of Khurāsān, as far as the Āmū-Daryā river, under his protection. In agreeing to their petition, Āghā Muḥammad Khān is supposed to have said, "If, according to your desire, I put the crown on my head, this will cause you, in the beginning, toil and hardship, as I take no pleasure in bearing the title of king as long as I am not one of the greatest kings of Persia. This petition will not be granted but by toil and fatigue."[11] Āghā Muḥammad Khān intended to make his coronation ceremony an act of legitimation. Following the Safavid custom, the sword of Shāh Ismāʿīl Ṣafavī was suspended from the roof of the tomb-chamber of Shaikh Ṣafī at the shrine of Ardabīl on the eve of the coronation, while prayers were offered for the new Shah's welfare. The next day, the sword was brought from Ardabīl and girded on the new ruler. The crown was placed on his head and on each arm he wore an arm-band in which were set the famous gems, the *Daryā-yi Nūr* and *Tāj-i Māh*. Surviving portraits of Āghā Muḥammad show him wearing a high, ovoid crown, the lower part encrusted with pearls and precious stones. The ceremony was followed by a feast and distribution of alms. Shortly afterwards, the Shah and his army set off for Tehran, but his ultimate destination was Mashhad.

Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm stayed in Tehran to supervise the administration, and there he received the envoys of the French Republic, J-G. Brugières and G-A. Olivier, who urged him to persuade the Shah to consolidate his hold over Georgia and establish an outlet to Europe by way of Mingrelia, before the Russians annexed the southern Caucasus region. Meanwhile, the confusion prevailing in Khurāsān made its conquest comparatively easy. This region, untouched by the earlier struggles among the Zand, Bakhtiyārī and Qājār rivals, had formerly

[11] Ḥasan-i Fasāʾī, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

been protected by the Durrānī ruler, Aḥmad Shāh, but after his death in 1187/1773, his successors preferred to concentrate their attention upon their Indian borderlands. In the late decades of the 18th century, Khurāsān was in a state of near anarchy. In Mashhad, the authority of Shāhrukh, Nādir Shāh's grandson, was hardly more than nominal. Outside Mashhad, the surrounding countryside was held by various independent chieftains, of whom the most powerful was probably Isḥāq Khān, with his headquarters at Turbat-i Ḥaidarī.[12] In the eastern foothills of the Alburz, Kurdish chieftains controlled the higher land from such strongholds as Bujnūrd, Khabūshān (Qūchān), Darra Gaz and Kalāt. To the north, in the direction of the Qara-Qum, the barrier between Iran and the Khanates of Khiva and Bukhārā, dwelt the Türkmens: from west to east, the Göklen, the Tekke, the Yamūt, the Sariq, the Salor and Ersari. Across this vast expanse, tribal warfare, the plundering of caravans, and cattle- and slave-raiding were endemic.

The newly-crowned Āghā Muḥammad Shāh advanced into Khurāsān by way of Gurgān, halting in Astarābād to punish the Göklen Türkmens who had been raiding in that province.[13] He then left for Mashhad, while local khans, recognizing the impossibility of resistance, hastened to submit. All these chieftains were forced to hand over hostages, who were sent to Tehran. As Āghā Muḥammad Shāh approached Mashhad, Shāhrukh came to the Qājār camp, accompanied by a leading *mujtahid*, Mīrzā Mahdī, and one of his sons. Āghā Muḥammad Shāh sent his nephew, Ḥusain Qulī Khān (the younger brother of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān), to welcome the party, and the visitors, especially the mujtahid, were treated with respect. He then sent Sulaimān Khān Qājār, accompanied by Mīrzā Mahdī and 8,000 troops, to occupy the city and assure its inhabitants of the Shah's benevolence. The next day, Āghā Muḥammad Shāh entered Mashhad on foot (as Shāh ʿAbbās I had been accustomed to do) as a pilgrim to the shrine of Imām Riżā, weeping and kissing the earth. For the next twenty-three days, he continued his pilgrimage, seemingly oblivious of affairs of state. Then a change came over him. Orders were given for the exhumation of Nādir Shāh's remains, which were reburied with those of Karīm Khān Zand in Tehran; Shāhrukh was compelled to surrender any jewels formerly belonging to Nādir Shāh. Shāhrukh denied on oath that he had any left. Under torture, he revealed the whereabouts of some of the gems. He was tortured again, and handed over a great ruby which

[12] According to Morier, Isḥāq Khān possessed 160,000 sheep, 20,000 camels and 6,000 brood-mares. *Op. cit.*, p. 239.

[13] It was perhaps in regard to this punitive expedition that Fraser heard the rumour that the Shah had "ordered that all the male captives should have the thumb of their right hand cut out by the socket, thus disabling them from using either the bow or the spear". Fraser, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

Āghā Muḥammad Shāh had long coveted.[14] Shāhrukh and his family were then sent to Māzandarān. Shāhrukh himself died on the way, at Dāmghān, where his tomb still stands. He was sixty-three, and had ruled Khurāsān, in name at least, for forty-six years.

THE LAST MONTHS

The Shah had arrived in Mashhad in May 1796. He seems to have spent some time there, settling the affairs of Khurāsān. It is possible that he contemplated advancing against Herat, then an appendage of the Durrānī kingdom, but formerly a Safavid province and traditional residence of the Safavid *valī ᶜahd.* He may also have contemplated, as Malcolm was told, an expedition against Bukhārā, to avenge the Mangit usurper Shāh Murād's treatment of the Qājārs of Marv. He sent an emissary to Bukhārā, addressed not to Shāh Murād, but to Abuʾl-Ghāzī Khān, last ruler of the dispossessed Janid dynasty, demanding the return of Iranian slaves held in Bukhārā. Shāh Murād is said to have replied insultingly, but to have assembled the Iranian captives in Bukhārā so that they should be ready, if necessary, to be returned to Iran. Āghā Muḥammad Shāh is also supposed to have proposed at this time a combined attack on Bukhārā to Tīmūr Shāh Durrānī.

In the event, news of developments in the north-west called for immediate action. Catherine II, eager to extend Russia's hegemony beyond the Caucasus, and having a pretext in the Shah's treatment of her client, Erekle, had sent an expedition into the south-eastern Caucasus, under the command of Count Valerian Zubov. Its goal was to annex the Kura–Aras region and chastise the Shah. Zubov first occupied Darband and Bākū, the districts of Salyan and Ṭālish, and then Shamākhī and Ganja; it seemed that his final destination was Tabrīz. However, the death of Catherine in November 1796, and the accession of Paul I, opposed to his mother's Caucasian policies, led to the expedition's immediate recall. Meanwhile, the Shah had returned to Tehran, ordering the military commanders in the provinces to assemble there with their contingents the following spring. Āghā Muḥammad Shāh apparently contemplated an extended campaign, for he summoned Fatḥ ᶜAlī Khān to Tehran and appointed him deputy (*Nāʾib al-Salṭana*) during his absence. In Dhuʾl-Ḥijja 1211/June 1797, the Shah left Tehran, intending to march through Āẕarbāījān to Qarābāgh, Shīrvān and Georgia, but in camp at Sulṭānīya, the news of Zubov's

[14] Malcolm, *op. cit.* II, pp. 290–1.

recall arrived. This led to a change of plan. It was less urgent to punish Georgia, and the Shah decided to deal first with the recalcitrant Ibrāhīm Khān of Qarābāgh, who had recently become a Russian protégé. The royal army therefore advanced from Miyāna to Ardabīl, and then moved towards Shūsha. At Ādīnabāzār, there appeared a delegation of notables from Shūsha, announcing that Ibrāhīm Khān and his family had fled into Dāghistān, and inviting the Shah to take possession of their city. In response to this unanticipated good fortune, the Shah left the army at Ādīnabāzār in the charge of Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm and Sulaimān Khān Qūyūnlū. The Shah's nephew, Ḥusain Qulī Khān, and Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān's sons, Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā and Muḥammad Qulī Mīrzā, were with them. The Shah set off with 5,000 horsemen and 3,000 infantry and, rapidly fording the Aras, entered Shūsha. He remained there three days until, disturbed one evening by a quarrel between two servants in his private quarters, he ordered their immediate execution. Ṣādiq Khān, leader of the Shaqāqī Kurds, was present. He tried to intercede for the servants, but the Shah was implacable, agreeing only to postpone their execution until the following morning, to avoid shedding blood on a Friday. He foolishly allowed the condemned men to continue attending him until he fell asleep, when they, joined by a third servant, stabbed him to death, on 21 Dhuʾl-Ḥijja 1211/16 June 1797. They then fled to Ṣādiq Khān, bearing the treasure that the Shah had with him, including the *Daryā-yi Nūr* and the *Tāj-i Māh*. Ṣādiq Khān took the assassins under his protection, assumed charge of the regalia, and set out with his troops for Tabrīz. The Qājār ascendancy, to which the late Shah had devoted himself with such single-mindedness, was now to be put to the test.

Utter confusion followed the news of Āghā Muḥammad Shāh's death. In Shūsha, the royal troops dispersed, returning to the main camp, while the two officials who always accompanied the late Shah, the *Munshī al-Mamālik* and the *Īshīk Āqāsī Bāshī*, fled to Tehran by way of Nakhchivān and Marāgha. The inhabitants of Shūsha plundered the Shah's camp, while the local *ʿulamā* buried his remains. Confusion also reigned in the main camp at Ādīnabāzār. Ḥusain Qulī Khān and Sulaimān Khān Qūyūnlū set off with the sons of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān for Tehran by way of Ṭālish, Shaft and Rasht. Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm took the main part of the army, including the Māzandarānī musketeers and the contingent from Fārs, and travelled via Ardabīl and Zanjān to Tehran. Meanwhile, Mīrzā Muḥammad Khān Develū, the governor of Tehran, closed the gates of the city and put the citadel in a state of defence until Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān could arrive from Shīrāz. The princes and nobles arriving from Shūsha encamped outside the walls but were denied entry.

Āghā Muḥammad Shāh's brother, ʿAlī Qulī Khān, had been in Erivan at the time of the Shah's assassination. Marching via Khūy, Tabrīz and Marāgha, he approached Tehran from the west, but on being denied entry to the city, withdrew to the fortress of ʿAlī Shāh on the river Karaj, where he proclaimed himself Shah. At the same time, Ṣādiq Khān and his Shaqāqī Kurds, who had left Shūsha for Tabrīz on the night of the Shah's assassination, marched on Sarāb and Qazvīn, in order to free the Khan's wife and son held captive there, while at the same time summoning followers from Suldūz, Marāgha, Tabrīz, Ardabīl and Mughān. Having appointed his brother, Muḥammad ʿAlī Sulṭān, governor of Tabrīz, and another brother, Jaʿfar Khān, governor of Qarājadāgh, he himself settled down to besiege Qazvīn. In Qazvīn, the garrison played for time, holding out until the arrival of a relief force from Tehran. Meanwhile, Ṣādiq Khān ordered his brothers to take Khūy and, in an effort to raise an army to achieve this, the two chieftains assembled a mixed force including artisans and craftsmen pressed from the bazaars of Tabrīz, as well as recruits from Qarājadāgh.

News of the Shah's murder did not reach Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān in Shīrāz until ten days after it had happened. He made the necessary arrangements, appointing his eldest son, the nine-year-old Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, nominal beglerbegī of Fārs, observed three days of mourning, and then left for Tehran. Some distance short of Ray, he was joined by Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm, Ḥusain Qulī Khān, and the loyal princes and he was informed of the rebellion of his uncle, ʿAlī Qulī Khān. The latter fell into his nephew's hands, was blinded, and then allowed to live in retirement at Bārfarūsh, where he died in 1240/1824–5. Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān made his formal entry into Tehran on 20 Ṣafar 1212/15 August 1797.

Ṣādiq Khān Shaqāqī was still besieging Qazvīn, so Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān marched on the city with as large a force as he could muster. Ṣādiq Khān advanced to meet him at Khāk-i ʿAlī, about thirty miles east of Qazvīn, and after a hard-fought engagement, the Kurd's forces were dispersed with heavy losses, and the royal army entered Qazvīn. Ṣādiq Khān and his remaining men fled to Sarāb, intending to go to Āẕarbāījān, where he believed that his brothers had strengthened the fortifications of Tabrīz and gained possession of Khūy. In Sarāb, however, he met them both, fugitives like himself. The governor of Khūy, Jaʿfar Khān Dunbulī, and his brother, the former governor of Tabrīz, Ḥusain Khān Dunbulī, had united their Kurdish followers, scattered in the confusion following Āghā Muḥammad Shāh's death, and defeated Ṣādiq Khān's brothers. Ṣādiq Khān had to submit, although he was in a strong position, in that he still had Āghā Muḥammad Shāh's crown-jewels. Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, who had come to

Zanjān intending to restore order in Āẕarbāījān, agreed that, in return for the jewels, Ṣādiq Khān be pardoned. With his supporters killed or dispersed, the jewels in themselves were of little use to Ṣādiq Khān and, in his own districts, the Shaqāqī Kurds were held in check by their Dunbulī rivals. Ṣādiq Khān made a good bargain, gaining the districts of Sarāb and Garmrūd. Meanwhile, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, learning that plague was ravaging Āẕarbāījān, preferred to settle its affairs from a distance. The recalcitrant chieftains submitted, and received honours and offices. Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Qūyūnlū, Āghā Muḥammad's maternal cousin, was re-appointed governor of Erivan, which he was to hold against the Russians in 1804, and Jaʿfar Khān Dunbulī was rewarded with the governorships of Tabrīz and Khūy. Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān then returned to Tehran, which he reached in Jumādā II 1212/November–December 1797.

His obligations to his dead uncle were now fulfilled. Two of the late Shah's assassins had been seized when the Qājār troops entered Qazvīn. One was cut to pieces by Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān's brother; the other was dismembered by the Shah's executioner. The third, captured later near Kirmānshāh, was burnt to death in Tehran. Orders were sent to Ibrāhīm Khān, now back in Shūsha, to exhume the body of Āghā Muḥammad Shāh and send it with suitable honours to Tehran, where it rested for three days in the shrine of Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm, to the south of the city. A great procession, led by Muḥammad ʿAlī Khān Qūyūnlū, a close kinsman of the late Shah, with an escort of 2,000 horsemen, then accompanied the corpse to Najaf, where the cortège was received by the Pasha of Baghdad. Like Shāh ʿAbbās I, Āghā Muḥammad Shāh was buried in the *ḥaram* of the Imām ʿAlī, where his tomb came to be venerated as that of a *shahīd* (martyr) who had died waging *jihād* against the unbelievers. However, one pilgrim who visited the tomb shortly afterwards was not impressed: "On the outside of the mausoleum, near the door, and under the path-way, are deposited the remains of Shah Abbass, of Persia: and on the other side of the building, adjacent to the platform on which prayers are said, is a small apartment, in which is the tomb of Mohammad Khan Kajar, late king of Persia, formed of a single block of white marble, on which they constantly burn the wood of aloes, and every night light up camphire tapers in silver candlesticks; and, during both the day and the night, several devout persons are perpetually employed in chaunting the Koran. All this pomp and state at the tomb of Mohammed Khan is highly improper in the vicinity of the holy shrine, and can only be attributed to the ignorance and rusticity of his descendants."[15]

[15] Mīrzā Abū Ṭālib Khān, *Travels* II, pp. 345–6.

On 3 Shawāl 1212/21 March 1798, which was both Naurūz and the ʿĪd al-Fiṭr, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān crowned himself Shah in the Gulistān Palace in Tehran. Opposition to his succession was not yet over. That summer, Ṣādiq Khān Shaqāqī and Jaʿfar Khān Dunbulī rebelled, and hardly had the one submitted and the other fled into Ottoman territory, before the Shah's brother, Ḥusain Qulī Khān, now beglerbegī of Fārs, revolted. Nevertheless, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh was now firmly seated upon his throne, and his brother's rebellion came to nothing. He had little statesmanship or charisma, but his rule was secure. Āghā Muḥammad Shāh's ambitions had been fulfilled: the Qājārs, in the person of his favourite nephew, were finally established on the throne of the Safavids.

It is difficult to view the reign of Āghā Muḥammad Khān in perspective. The entire plateau was rife with warfare. The Shah himself was constantly on the move. The sources seem little more than accounts of a string of engagements. Scarcely any European travellers visited Qājār Iran before the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh or left descriptions of what they saw, while the grotesque anedotes of Āghā Muḥammad Shāh's cruelty do little to give a balanced view of events of the period.

Āghā Muḥammad Khān was a man who governed from the saddle, and his leadership was tenacious rather than charismatic. As a military commander he was undoubtedly able; it is worth recalling Malcolm's assessment of his troops, written not long after his death: "His army was inured to fatigue, and regularly paid; he had introduced excellent arrangement into all its Departments, and his known severity occasioned the utmost alacrity and promptness in the execution of orders, and had he lived a few more years, it is difficult to conjecture the progress of his arms."[16] Beside this opinion may be placed a second, also by a Briton, James Baillie Fraser: "Aga Mahomed had likewise the talent of forming good and brave troops. His active and ambitious disposition kept his army constantly engaged; and they acquired a veteran hardihood and expertness, that rendered them superior to any other Asiatic troops."[17]

Thus, Āghā Muḥammad Shāh's success was evidently due to a combination of skilful military organization, the ability to manipulate and control shifting rivalries and alliances among the tribes, and the qualities of a tireless, far-sighted and prudent commander in the field. While no precise figures for the Qājār army of the late 18th century exist, those obtained by Malcolm in 1801 reflect the scale of the military establishment in the preceding reign. Malcolm mentions 35,000 regular cavalry and 15,000 infantry, a standing army paid from the central

[16] Malcolm, "Memorandum", *Journal of the Central Asian Society* XVI, p. 19.

[17] Fraser, *op. cit.*, p. 229.

treasury.[18] In addition, levies of both cavalry and infantry could be summoned from the provinces and tribes when needed. There was an ineffective artillery arm, manned mainly by Georgian and Armenian gunners, which Malcolm thought capable of improvement. There were also 200 *zamburaks* (swivel-guns mounted on camels), which were judged to be purely ceremonial.[19]

The regular cavalry included the royal *ghulām*s (household cavalry), mainly recruited from the Astarābād region, while the most valuable infantry were the Māzandarānī *tufangchī*s (musketeers). Āghā Muḥammad Shāh was said to have called them "the Shah's bodyshirt" (*pīrāhan-i tan-i shāh*), and in times of danger, he slept in their midst.[20] Writing during the middle years of the next reign, Fraser states that the provinces of Māzandarān and Astarābād had their revenues commuted to the provision of 12,000 tufangchīs and 4,000 cavalry.[21]

Āghā Muḥammad Shāh employed the tactics of his own Qājār tribe and their Türkmen neighbours, in which the surprise attack, encirclement from the rear, and maximum mobility all featured. He rarely lost an engagement, but had the reputation of only giving battle when reasonably sure of victory. His troops lived off the country when in enemy territory and, wherever appropriate, he employed a "scorched earth" policy to deny the enemy supplies.[22] He knew that his soldiers were capable of spontaneous feats of courage and daring, but, if confronted by resolute opponents, tended to lack tenacity.[23] During Count Zubov's invasion in 1211–12/1797, he told Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm that while he intended to harry the Russians mercilessly, he would never send his troops into close combat with the Russian infantry, because of their formidable fire-power and unyielding ranks; he took this decision long before he entered the field. When caution or retreat were needed, or a strategy required modification, he would quickly appreciate the situation: as Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm told the British, Āghā Muḥammad Shāh was a brave enough leader in battle, but his "head . . . never left work for his hand!"[24] His re-uniting of the Iranian plateau under a single rule owed as much to his astuteness as to his military skill.

A central issue for Āghā Muḥammad Shāh was the tribal arithmetic of eighteenth-century Iran. Since the overthrow of the Safavids, every contender

[18] Morier heard that, in order to prevent peculation of his soldiers' wages, the Shah paid his troops with his own hand. *Second Journey*, p. 238. [19] Malcolm, "Memorandum", pp. 20–1.

[20] Fraser, *Winter's Journey* II, p. 481. [21] Fraser, *Khorassan*, p. 228.

[22] Thus, when the Shah's troops were advancing against Erivan in 1209–10/1795, it was said that Iranian Muslims from Qarābāgh, Nakhchivān and Erivan fled into Gurjistān along with Armenians, fearing the depredations of his troops. Artemi, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

[23] Artemi declared: "The Persians indeed attack like lions but they exert their strength in the first blow, and if this fails, they return home." *Ibid*, p. 205. [24] Malcolm, *History* II, p. 302.

for power had needed an adequate base among these groups. They had constituted the basis of Nādir Shāh's régime, and had also been the cause of its disintegration. In order to succeed, Āghā Muḥammad Shāh had to create a network of tribal alliances and allegiances. His own Qājār tribe, although not numerous, were wardens of the north-eastern marches and enjoyed a reputation for their fighting skill. With Gurgān cut off from the rest of Iran, and difficult to attack from the south, his original home-base was relatively secure, especially as the Qājārs of Astarābād generally enjoyed good relations with the Türkmen tribes of the south-western Qara-Qum. Unpredictable as the Türkmens might be, the Yamūt had, on more than one occasion, provided sanctuary and support to Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān and his son, and been rewarded accordingly with opportunities for raiding with the Qājārs, with access to superior pastures and with marriage alliances with the Qājārs. Thus, the Yamūt were permitted to move from the arid banks of the Atrak to the fertile Gurgān plain, where the villages along the Qara Sū were allotted to them as *tuyūl*, thus provoking strife between the newcomers and the settled cultivators of the Atak.[25] However, the Türkmens were always uncertain neighbours and, on at least one occasion towards the end of the reign, Āghā Muḥammad Shāh, exasperated by the depredations of the Göklen in northern Khurāsān, severely punished them during his 1210–11/1796 campaign in that province.

From Gurgān, he first turned his attention to Māzandarān, and recruited there those Māzandarānī tufangchīs whom he so highly prized. Yet even with them and his Türkmen allies, he still lacked the tribal following that the Zands possessed. To compensate, he methodically established a network of clients and allies among the tribal leaders of the north and west, especially in the Khamsa region of ᶜIrāq-i ᶜAjam and in Āẕarbāījān. This frequently involved choosing between two rival groups. His support of the Dunbulī Kurds rather than their Shaqāqī Kurdish rivals in Āẕarbāījān exemplifies this. It also involved skilful use of threats and rewards: on the one hand, the practice of taking hostages from the families of tribal leaders and, on the other, offering them marriages into the ruling house. Tribes could be won over by partnership with the victorious Qājārs, with opportunities for plunder, for settling old scores with rivals, and for better grazing grounds. They could likewise be coerced by threatening withdrawal of such prospects, the promotion of a rival tribe or faction, and ultimately, punitive measures such as the confiscation of livestock or forcible eviction. In Māzandarān, for example, three distinct tribal groups were settled in

[25] Rabino, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

the province by Āghā Muḥammad Shāh, either by persuasion or force: the ʿAbd al-Malikī, the Kurd-u-Turk, and the Khwājavand. The ʿAbd al-Malikī, said to have been 4,000 Qashqāʾī families which had originally opposed the Qājār advance into the south, were moved to Nūr and Kujūr around 1205–6/1791, and later transferred to the area between Ashraf and Faraḥābād. The Kurd-u-Turk, a composite group dominated by Mukrī Kurds from Sāūj Bulāgh in Āẕarbāījān, and various Turkish tribes from Khurāsān, were settled around Sārī. The Khwājavand, originally from the Khurrāmābād region, were first located north of Tehran, but were later transferred to the Tunakābun district.

To the west, in the Khamsa region of ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam, which was among the earliest conquests of the Qājārs south of the Alburz, the Turkish Īnāllū Shāhsevan and the Baghdādī Shāhsevan were both apparently relocated in the Sāva and Kharaqān districts.[26] Further west still, he formed alliances with the Mukrī Kurds of Sāūj Bulāgh, the Dunbulī Kurds of Khūy, and the Qarāgūzlū Turks of Hamadān, to name only three. Even more important was the close collaboration between the Qājārs and the Vālīs of Ardalān, an alliance first formulated during the lifetime of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār, and thereafter sedulously pursued by Āghā Muḥammad Shāh and Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh.

In the middle decade of the 18th century, the ruling Vālī, Ḥasan ʿAlī Khān, had found himself embroiled in two feuds: with the Bābān Kurdish chieftain, Selim Pāshā, and in the rivalries of Āzād Khān the Afghan, Karīm Khān Zand and ʿAlī Mardān Khān Bakhtiyārī. He was eventually killed by Selim Pāshā, but his son, Khusrau Khān, a confidant and companion of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār, fought his way into the Vālī's capital of Senna, now Sanandaj, and was acclaimed Vālī in Muḥarram 1168/October-November 1754. Shortly thereafter, he sustained a brief siege by the forces of Āzād Khān, which were driven off by a Qājār relief-column. Āzād Khān withdrew northwards, and Khusrau Khān, coming out of Sanandaj, pursued him vigorously as far as Garrūs and defeated him, winning great booty, as well as the respect of his Qājār ally. Thereafter, for more than thirty years (1168–76/174–62 and 1179–1204/1765–89), Khusrau Khān remained one of the most prominent figures in western Iran, and a staunch ally of Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān until the latter's death in 1172/1759. Thereafter, he was compelled to submit to Karīm Khān Zand, who confirmed him as Vālī, enabling him to consolidate his position in Ardalān until Karīm Khān's death in 1193/1779. Under Karīm Khān's successors, however, he became restless. Mention has already been made of his eventual submission to Āghā Muḥammad

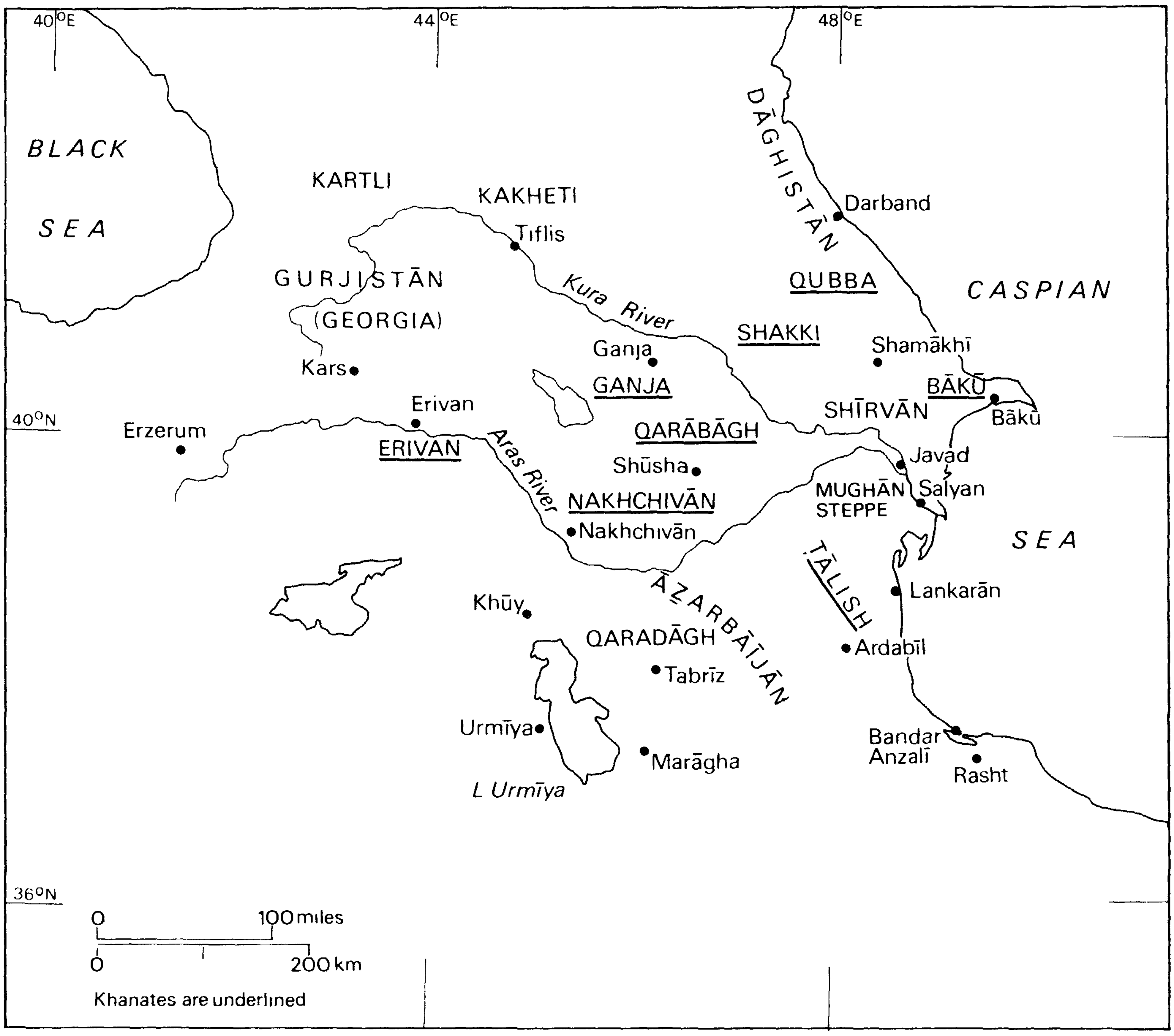
[26] Field, *Contributions*, XXIX, pts. 1 & 2, pp. 167–8, 171; Rabino, *op. cit.*, pp. 11–12.

Khān, and the events leading up to it (see p. 119 supra). Khusrau Khān died in 1204/1789. Following the brief rule of two successors, the vilāyat passed to his younger son, Amān-Allāh (1214/1799), whose long tenure of office, partly coinciding with the governorship of Kirmānshāh province by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's eldest son, Muḥammad ʿAli Mīrzā, confirmed in the third generation the mutual advantages enjoyed by both parties to the Qājār-Ardalān alliance.

The civil administration of Iran during the reign of Āghā Muḥammad Shāh appears rudimentary. The Shah was mainly preoccupied with military matters.[27] His court was almost invariably his tent, and it has been seen that his chief minister, Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm, was also often in the field, as were the secretaries and those answerable to the Shah for the fisc. For years, Āghā Muḥammad Shāh relied upon only two senior officials to handle affairs of state. These were Mīrzā Ismāʿīl, a former household servant of the Qājārs, who acted as *mustaufī* (chief revenue officer), and Mīrzā Asad-Allāh Nūrī, from the district of Nūr in Māzandarān, who served as *lashkar-navīs* (military paymaster). Mīrzā Ismāʿīl endeavoured to establish a secure revenue after decades of fiscal mismanagement but, as ʿAbd-Allāh Mustaufi says, in describing his ancestor Mīrzā Ismāʿīl's experiences in Āghā Muḥammad Khān's service, "Āghā Muḥammad was himself the treasurer, minister of finance and *ṣāḥib-i dīvān* of his own government."[28] Not until 1209/1794–5 did he acquire a principal vazīr in the traditional sense, when Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm became the *Iʿtimād al-Daula*.

Āghā Muḥammad Shāh recruited officials such as he needed from any available source. The former Zand administration was not excluded and provided, among others, Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm and Mīrzā Buzurg, the *Qāʾim-Maqām* of the next reign. What he required in his agents was effectiveness and loyalty. A typical example was Ḥajjī Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān, an illiterate tradesman whom he appointed beglerbegī of Iṣfahān, and who subsequently rose even higher. As Morier relates: "He was originally a green-grocer of Ispahan, of which city he and his family are natives. His first rise from this humble station was to become Kat Khoda (or deputy) of his *mahal*, or division; his next, to become that of a larger *mahal*; he was then promoted to be the *Kelanter*, or mayor, of the city; and thence he became the *Thaubit*, or Chief, of a rich and extensive district near Ispahan, where he acquired great reputation for his good government. He afterwards made himself acceptable in the eyes of the late King [Āghā Muḥammad Shāh], by a large *peesh-kesh*, or present; and as the then Governor of Ispahan was a man of dissolute life, oppressive and unjust, he succeeded in

[27] Āghā Muḥammad Khān is said to have despised bureaucrats as *firaī-khūr* (milksops). ʿAbd-Allāh Mustaufī, *Sharḥ-i Zindagānī-yi Man*, 2nd. ed., Tehran, n.d., I, pp. 5, 11. [28] *Ibid*, p. 12.



Map 4. Northwestern Iran during the lifetime of Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār

deposing him, and was himself appointed the *Beglarbeg*: here, from his intimate knowledge of the markets, and of all the resources of the city, and of its inhabitants, he managed to create a larger revenue than had ever before been collected."[29]

Provincial administration in the late 18th century followed the precedents of Safavid times: beglerbegīs were appointed to provinces, and ḥākims to less important charges; city government was divided between the *kalāntar* and the *dārūgha*; and in the *maḥals* (city quarters), the grievances of the people were addressed to the *kadkhudā*. The manner of control in either cities or countryside did not apparently undergo any radical change during the reign of Āghā Muḥammad Shāh. Of greater significance for the population was the fact that no

[29] Morier, *Second Journey*, p. 131.

government within living memory had so effectively enforced its will. Āghā Muḥammad Shāh seems to have cherished a belief in his rôle as a traditional *Shāhanshāh*, the fount of justice and protector of the poor. Wide stretches of the country were forcibly pacified, the servants of the government were compelled to exercise moderation in their demands, the roads were made safe for merchants, and justice was meted out from the throne, albeit with a heavy hand. Malcolm, reporting opinion in Iran shortly after Āghā Muḥammad Shāh's death, states that, "Aga Mahomed Khan was rigid in the administration of justice. He punished corruption in the magistrates, whenever it was detected. Such as committed crimes which according to the Koran merited death, were seldom forgiven; and he never pardoned persons who in any shape disturbed the tranquillity of his dominions . . . during the latter years of his reign commerce revived in every quarter. This was not more the consequence of his justice, than of the general security which his rule inspired; and of the extinction, through the severity of his punishments, of those bands of robbers with which the country had before been infested. To the farmers and cultivators he gave no further protection than what they derived from the terror of his name; but that was considerable: from the collector of a district to the governor of a province, all dreaded a complaint to a monarch, by whom the slightest deviations in those who exercised power, were often visited by the most dreadful punishments."[30]

It is unclear whether Āghā Muḥammad Shāh pursued a deliberate policy in his dealings with the Shīʿī *ʿulamā*. Brought up in the house of a Sayyid and for a time passed off as his son, he showed respect for the ʿulamā throughout his life and supported them with grants and endowments.[31] His ostensible piety, notwithstanding his reputation as a wine-bibber, certainly won their approval. A chronicle describes him, in 1210–11/1796, approaching the shrine of the Eighth Imām on foot: ". . . displaying signs of weakness, poverty, humility, and submissiveness, and shedding tears, he walked to the shrine and kissed the blessed soil".[32] Elsewhere, the same source, commenting upon his death, declares: "All his life he had honored the Sharia. As long as he lived he performed his prayers at the time prescribed, and each midnight, though he passed the day in toil and exertion, he rose to offer a prayer."[33]

Another chronicle relates how, when recovering from an illness, he dreamt that he saw a figure dressed as a *mullā*. He claimed that this experience fortified the sense which he had of his royal mission. He may, like the late Muḥammad

[30] Malcolm, *History* II, pp. 206, 212. [31] Algar, *Religion*, pp. 42–3.
[32] Ḥasan-i Fasāʾī, *op. cit.*, p. 70. [33] *Ibid*, p. 74.

Riżā Shāh,[34] have supposed his visitor to have been Ḥażrat ʿAlī, or perhaps the Eighth or Twelfth Imām, both of whose names were inscribed on his coinage, as they were on that of most rulers from the time of Shāh Ṭahmāsp II onwards.[35]

Āghā Muḥammad Shāh's patronage of Islamic institutions indicates an awareness of the duties of a Shīʿī ruler. In Tehran, he ordered the construction of the Masjid-i Shāh, Shah's mosque, and in Mashhad, the renovation of the shrine. Āghā Muḥammad Shāh also commissioned some secular building, less for aesthetic than for practical purposes. In Astarābād, he repaired or strengthened the walls, cleared the ditch, erected public buildings, including a palace for the beglerbegī, and generally improved the town's amenities.[36] Similar repairs and improvements were undertaken at Bārfarūsh (Bābul) and Ashraf, and especially at Sārī, where he built himself a palace.[37] In general, however, a lifetime of campaigning, followed by a comparatively brief reign, did not permit much patronage of architecture or the arts. Perhaps his most enduring legacy is Tehran itself, although little remains of the city as it was in his lifetime.

Early in the course of establishing his power, Āghā Muḥammad Shāh was compelled to address the question of the succession. He, of course, had no issue, but in choosing a successor, he had to avoid further exacerbating the internecine feuding among the Qājār clans. In addition to the rivalry between the Yūkhārī-bāsh and Ashāqa-bāsh Qājārs, there had also been the destructive feud between the Qūyūnlū and the Develū clans among the latter. These conflicts had to be resolved for Qājār rule to survive. Among his siblings, only Ḥusain Qulī Khān was a full-brother, and hence his obvious heir, but he predeceased the monarch. Fortunately he left sons, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān and Ḥusain Qulī Khān. As soon as Āghā Muḥammad Khān escaped captivity in Shīrāz in 1192–3/1779, he seems to have determined that Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān should be his heir, and in 1196/1781–2, he arranged his nephew's marriage to the daughter of Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān Develū, thereby binding the rival families of Qūyūnlū and Develū in a marriage alliance. He further promoted this alliance through the marriage of his grandson, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's son, ʿAbbās Mīrzā, to a Develū Qājār girl in 1216–17/1802, and there is other evidence[38] of Āghā Muḥammad Shāh's foresight in respect of the succession. All his hopes for the future of his dynasty were thus linked to the line of ʿAbbas Mīrzā and his descendants. Indeed a European traveller in Iran during the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh heard the rumour that, had Āghā Muḥammad Khān

[34] Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, *Mission for My Country* (London, 1961), pp. 54–5.
[35] Rabino, *Coins*, pp. 61–2. [36] Morier, *Second Journey*, pp. 367–77.
[37] Forster, *Journey* II, p. 198; Fraser, *Travels*, pp. 41–2.
[38] Ḥasan-i Fasāʾī, *op. cit.*, p. 160.

lived longer, he would have bypassed the succession of his nephew in favour of ʿAbbās Mīrzā.[39] It was this preoccupation with neutralizing inter-tribal feuds among the Qājārs, as well as his dream of a Qūyūnlū ruling house which led to the exclusion from the succession of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's eldest son, Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, the offspring of a Georgian concubine, who was perhaps the ablest of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's sons and who, had he lived and reigned, might have injected into the government of the kingdom some of his great-uncle's wilful energy and prudent foresight.

[39] Drouville, *Voyages* I, p. 237.

CHAPTER 4

IRAN DURING THE REIGNS OF FATḤ ᶜALĪ SHĀH AND MUḤAMMAD SHĀH

The kingdom which Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh inherited in 1797 resembled an estate long neglected by successive owners. Indeed it had been for the best part of a century. Had Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shah wondered, as he presided over the first New Year festival of a long reign of thirty-seven years, what were the resources of his inheritance in manpower or revenues, it is doubtful whether anyone near him could have provided the requisite information, or even delineated the frontiers of his kingdom. The claim or aspiration was that his domain equalled that of his Safavid predecessors in the days of their greatness; certainly it exceeded the bounds of present-day Iran. In reality, however, the royal writ ran far from smoothly, authority emanating from Tehran but repeatedly interrupted. In much of Khurāsān, or the more remote marches of the Lur, Türkmen or Balūch country, the Shah was scarcely even nominal ruler. Yet in spite of the practical constraints upon his exercise of power and the humiliation of two defeats suffered at the hands of Russia which entailed a loss of territory, the close of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh's reign did see the definitive re-establishment of a "Royaume de Perse".

Early 19th-century European observers of Iran doubted whether the Shah's government had the will or the means to refurbish this derelict estate; it is unlikely that either the Shah or his kinsmen thought in terms of "improving" the kingdom's resources as a contemporary English Whig landowner would have done. Nevertheless, it is a fact that Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh's reign ultimately afforded sufficient order and effective government to make possible some economic recovery. Contemporary Europeans criticized the early Qājārs for corruption, brutality, and ineptitude, but notwithstanding what, measured against contemporary European expectations of how states should be managed, were vices in the bureaucracy, Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh's Iran was more tranquil and prosperous than it had been at any time since Safavid rule had ceased to be effective.

Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh seems to have aimed at ruling in accordance with those concepts of Iranian *Shāhanshāhī* which the age of the Safavids had come to symbolize. He did not possess the sacral charisma enjoyed by the descendants of

Shāh Ismāᶜīl I, but he stressed his family's links with the heroic past of the Oghuz, with the migrations of the Türkmens in the days of the Īl-Khāns and the Āq Qūyūnlū, and with the age of Qizilbāsh hegemony. Court chroniclers lent their eloquence to the historicity of this tribal heritage. Bas-reliefs of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh and his sons were carved on rock faces in the Sasanian style at Rayy and Tāq-i Bustān to proclaim the continuity of the monarchical tradition. Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh was following in his uncle's footsteps, but outstripped his predecessor in articulating regal splendour and pride. Court-painters celebrated their master's greatness in the life-size portraits, in the miniatures of him trampling on Russian corpses while survivors fled in terror at the mere sight of him, and in the elegant hunting-scenes on pen-cases and *ḥuqqa*-bowls (water pipe bowls).

In particular, uncertain frontiers posed problems. In the western Zagros region, for example, the nomadic population freely moved between the territories of the Shah and those of the Ottoman Sultan. As beglerbegī of Kirmānshāh, Luristān and Khūzistān, Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh's eldest son, Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā, made sporadic raids into areas which were supposedly part of the Ottoman *vilāyat* of Baghdad, just as his brother, ᶜAbbās Mīrzā, beglerbegi of Āẕarbāījān, did into the *vilāyat*s of Van and Erzerum. No one knew exactly where the lines of the frontier ran. They still awaited negotiation and agreement between the two governments.

In their raids across the Ottoman frontier, both princes asserted claims to territory which in Safavid times (if only for brief periods) had been Iranian. It was the same in the east: Herat and Qandahar had been important provinces of the Safavid kingdom. Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh assumed that both were included in his inheritance. To Safavid precedents he could add those of Nādir Shāh's conquests. On one occasion, asked by the Russians to help to punish the Khivans for harassing Russian merchants, he declared that, in order to campaign against Khiva, he must first, like Nādir Shāh, control Herat, Balkh and Bukhārā.[1]

In the east, attempts to advance the frontier were repelled by the Durrānī rulers of Afghanistan; in the west, by the Pashas of Baghdad, Van and Erzerum. More complicated was the situation on the Caucasian marches beyond the river Aras. Although, during the 1720s, Iranians, Ottomans and Russians had confronted each other in this ethnically and culturally diverse region, the Shahs of Iran had claimed suzerainty over some of the local rulers since the time of Shāh Ismāᶜīl I (A.D. 1501–24). These claims had been reasserted by Nādir Shāh, by Karīm Khān Zand and by Aghā Muḥammad Khān. Even when rulers on the

[1] See Avery, "An Enquiry", p. 24.

plateau lacked the means to effect suzerainty beyond the Aras, the neighbouring Khanates were still regarded as Iranian dependencies. Naturally, it was those Khanates located closest to the province of Āẕarbāījān which most frequently experienced attempts to re-impose Iranian suzerainty: the Khanates of Erivan, Nakhchivān and Qarābāgh across the Aras, and the cis-Aras Khanate of Ṭālish, with its administrative headquarters located at Lankarān and therefore very vulnerable to pressure, either from the direction of Tabrīz or Rasht. Beyond the Khanate of Qarābāgh, the Khān of Ganja and the Vālī of Gurjistān (ruler of the Kartli-Kakheti kingdom of south-east Georgia), although less accessible for purposes of coercion, were also regarded as the Shah's vassals, as were the Khāns of Shakki and Shīrvān, north of the Kura river. The contacts between Iran and the Khanates of Bākū and Qubba, however, were more tenuous and consisted mainly of maritime commercial links with Anzalī and Rasht.

The effectiveness of these somewhat haphazard assertions of suzerainty depended on the ability of a particular Shah to make his will felt, and the determination of the local khans to evade obligations they regarded as onerous. This situation completely changed in the second half of the 18th century, when the Russians advanced into the Caucasus and Erekle, Vālī of Gurjistān, voluntarily submitted to Catherine II in 1783 in the Treaty of Georgievsk. Āghā Muḥammad Khān regarded this as an act of defiance. It led to his punitive raid against Tiflis in 1795, which provoked Russian retaliation. Hence, by the end of the century, the Russians were seeking a clearly-defined defensive frontier with Iran. The frontier they envisaged would have to be the line of either the river Kura or the Aras. In retrospect, Russian expansion into the southern Caucasus region appears inevitable, but in Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's view of the world, the Khanates belonged wholly to Iran. Āghā Muḥammad Khān, as proof of his suzerainty over them, had minted gold and silver coins in Erivan, and silver ones in Ganja, Nukha (the capital of Shakki) and Shamīkhā (the capital of Shirvan), just as he had done in Yazd, Iṣfahān or Tabrīz. There was nothing peculiar in this: he regarded them all, as the Safavids and Nādir Shāh had done, as Iranian cities. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh did the same. Before the outbreak of war with Russia in 1804, he struck gold and silver coins at the Erivan and Ganja mints, and silver ones at Nukha. Until 1804 it is probable that neither the Shah nor his entourage fully apprehended the extent of the Russian threat. It would simply be perceived in terms of the type of trans-border skirmishing in which the Iranians engaged with their other neighbours, while it would be taken as axiomatic that local rulers in such circumstances would attempt to play off one potential overlord against another. It is unlikely that anyone in Tehran then imagined that the

Russian government in Saint Petersburg might be planning outright annexation, or that the pro-consular ambitions of local Russian commanders in the field would tend to promote just such an outcome. It was the manner of his dealings with the Russians as much as anything else that made contemporary British observers assume that Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh lived in a world of fantasy. Ignorant of the world beyond his frontiers he certainly was, but to blame him for failure to anticipate the subsequent course of Russian expansionism is to read back into the early years of the reign subsequent developments which few, around 1800, could have predicted.

When Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh became king, he was about twenty-six years old. Born in the early 1770s, when Karīm Khān Zand was in control of the greater part of western and central Iran, he grew up in that period when Āghā Muḥammad Khān was making an apparently desperate bid to topple Zand hegemony. He doubtless experienced the vicissitudes characteristic of such a time. Chosen by his forbidding uncle at an early age to be his heir, by the time he acquired the throne he had already seen a decade of hard campaigning. It cannot have been an easy apprenticeship. Āghā Muḥammad Khān was pitiless towards his enemies, but he could be no less implacable towards his own kin. The future Shah must more than once have trembled for his head during his uncle's terrible rages. But whatever the consequences of such an upbringing, by the time of his accession Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh had come to evince certain quite distinctive traits. It was not that he could not exert himself in a crisis (which he would continue to do, intermittently, down to the closing months of the reign), but that he preferred to enjoy to the full what had been toiled for so strenuously: to rule with a magnificence which the ceremony of the court was designed to enhance to the uttermost. Malcolm wrote that "On extraordinary occasions nothing can exceed the splendour of the Persian court. It presents a scene of the greatest magnificence, regulated by the most disciplined order. There is no part of the government to which so much attention is paid as the strictest maintenance of those forms and ceremonies, which are deemed essential to the power and glory of the monarch."[2] Sometimes, Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh showed cruelty reminiscent of Āghā Muḥammad Khān's, as in his treatment of his first prime minister. He also consistently displayed the avarice characteristic of his uncle, but he lacked the latter's extraordinary energy, and his personal indifference to ostentatious luxury. Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh was indolent, self-indulgent, vain and capricious; but his indolence generally ensured that he was not the scourge to those close to him that his

[2] Malcolm, *History* II, p. 555.

predecessor had been. To his credit, all observers agreed that he looked every inch a king, strikingly handsome, with a typical Qājār physiognomy. In most respects he was conventional. He was dignified and affable and, while showing conventional piety, a pleasure-seeker. James Baillie Fraser wrote that "... his dispositions are by no means bad: for a Persian monarch he is neither considered cruel, nor disposed to injustice; he is sincere in his religious professions". Fraser goes on to say that the king seldom took wines or spirits and was not debauched. He had, however, "... no title to courage; on the contrary he is reported to have behaved in a very questionable manner on the few occasions where he was required to face danger". And he was certainly not generous. Fraser thought him "... possessed of very little talent, and no strength of mind; sufficiently calculated to live as a respectable private character, but quite unfit to be the king of such a country; he could neither have succeeded to the throne, nor kept his seat there had not his powerful and crafty uncle worked for him, removing by force or guile every individual likely to give him trouble, and had not the surrounding countries been so circumstanced that no danger could reach him from abroad".[3]

The Shah's intelligence remains an open question. James Morier, the creator of *Ḥājjī Bābā of Iṣfahān*, and Alexander Burnes in his mocking account of his own reception in the royal durbar, represent him almost as a figure of fun in the manner of one of Rossini's comic-opera Pashas. Other Europeans who met him found him vivacious and inquisitive; and Malcolm thought that Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh had, "by the comparative mildness and justice of his rule entitled himself to a high rank among the Kings of Persia".[4]

Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh reigned for nearly four decades, and although he was twice defeated by the Russians and had to suffer the deviousness of European diplomats, such matters were temporary aggravations as compared with the ceaseless quest for ready cash, the constant intrigues of courtiers and ministers, the ambitions of provincial governors and tribal leaders, the riotous affrays which might suddenly engulf whole cities, and above all, the crises occasioned by the rivalries of that enormous brood of sons and daughters who bore witness to his sexual potency and appetite.[5]

The feuding of the Shah's progeny supplied the ground-swell which moulded the configuration of the reign. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh followed the custom of earlier Iranian dynasties in distributing provincial governorships among his

[3] Fraser, *Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan* I, pp. 192–3. [4] Malcolm, *op. cit.* II, p. 318.

[5] Fraser, writing in 1825, had heard that the Shah had "about fifty sons, and at least an hundred daughters". *Op. cit.* I, p. 203.

sons and grandsons, to prepare them for the exigencies of what was still perceived to be a shared family responsibility, but also to keep them from conspiring with, or against, each other. In Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's calculations, this was at the same time a means of alleviating the burden on the central treasury, since the prince-governors were required to maintain themselves from the revenues of their provinces. In addition, the system implicitly enabled the Shah to maintain that equilibrium among the diverse political elements in the country which at least one scholar has diagnosed as the essence of Qājār despotism.[6] The advantages of "farming out" the *Shāhzāda*s (the king's sons) to the provinces were obvious, but were offset by risks of another kind. In his provincial headquarters, often far removed from the scrutiny of Tehran, the prince-governor might nourish exaggerated ambitions, inflated by his sense of self-importance as lord of his little kingdom, and flattered by his entourage and local notables; enough encouragement might tempt him to build up a local power-base, as the prince-governors of both Kirmānshāh and Fārs were to do.

Depending upon the importance of their provinces and the extent of their resources, the prince-governors (the actual title was *beglerbegī*) maintained their own courts; provincial administrations with *vazīr*s and revenue officials (*mustaufī*s); a military establishment of retainers resembling the royal *ghulām*s in the capital; and all the inevitable hangers-on who sought to fatten themselves upon the prince-governor's patronage, and gambled on his prospects as a future contender for the throne. In some instances, the prince-governors were minors, and in such cases, in addition to their staff of regular officials, they had attached to their household a tutor and mentor whose role, in relation to his charge, resembled that of the *atābegs* of Saljuq times.

Among the band of rival siblings in the Qājār royal house, the most formidable, until his death in 1821, was the first-born, Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā. A Georgian concubine's offspring, he was ineligible for the succession, but proved himself an energetic, resourceful and ruthless leader, with several of the traits of his great-uncle, Āghā Muḥammad Khān. All acquainted with him acknowledged his audacity and courage, as well as less attractive qualities. Of him it was said that, on Āghā Muḥammad Khān enquiring of him, as a six-year old, what his first action would be, were he to become Shah, he replied: "To have you strangled!" Only the intervention of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's mother saved the child from immediate execution. Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā was one of five sons to be born to Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh in a single lunar year (1203/1788–9). It must have been

[6] Abrahamian, "Oriental Despotism", pp. 27–31.

obvious that, with the passage of time, these particular siblings would become bitter rivals, and such was, indeed, to be the case. They included the future *Valī ʿahd* (heir-apparent), ʿAbbās Mīrzā, the son of a Develū Qājār mother and designated by Āghā Muḥammad Khān to be Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's successor; the violent and intemperate Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā, future beglerbegī first of Khurāsān, and then Yazd; and also Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā, future beglerbegī of Fārs and an inveterate intriguer. Between Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā and ʿAbbās Mīrzā, in particular, intense hostility developed, which, some believed, was not unwelcome to the Shah.[7]

In 1799, the year following his father's enthronement, ʿAbbās Mīrzā, then ten years old, was granted the title of *Nāʾib al-Salṭana* to indicate that he was to be the heir to the throne, and was appointed beglerbegī of Āẕarbāījān, with his capital at Tabrīz. His mentor was the venerable Sulaimān Khān Qājār, a cousin of Āghā Muḥammad Khān. His vazīr was Mīrzā ʿĪsā Farāhānī, known as Mīrzā Buzurg, the nephew of Mīrzā Ḥusain Farāhānī, a former vazīr of Karīm Khān Zand. ʿAbbās Mīrzā remained resident beglerbegī of Āẕarbāījān until 1831,[8] and it was he, in the first instance, who had to face the Russians in the war of 1804–1813, and who unsuccessfully attempted to retrieve his honour in the second war of 1826–8. But these crisis years, though very significant, constituted two comparatively short periods in his extended rule over the most advanced, as well as the most exposed, province of the kingdom. In his time, Tabrīz flourished as a commercial and cultural centre, ironically, partly because the Russian frontier had crept so close. In times of peace, ʿAbbās Mīrzā passed his summers in Tabrīz and his winters in Khūy, interrupted by frequent visits to Tehran in order to protect his interests at court. Although he spoke no European language, he fraternized with Europeans to a far greater extent than any other member of the royal family. Before his premature death in 1833, he was regarded by those Europeans who believed that Iran needed reform and a large degree of westernization, as the one man capable of initiating a national revival.[9]

By way of contrast, Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, although described as being the "most able and warlike of all the princes of Persia",[10] was regarded by European observers as incurably reactionary. About 1802, his father appointed him

[7] Monteith, pp. 58–9.

[8] He did not cease to be beglerbegī of Āẕarbāījān in 1831, but in that year he was appointed, in addition, beglerbegī of Khurāsān, with the objective of pacifying that province and extending its frontiers. He remained nominally beglerbegī of Āẕarbāījān, but one of his younger sons acted as his deputy and was *de facto* governor.

[9] See H. Busse, "ʿAbbās Mīrzā", pp. 79–84, and Avery, *op. cit.*

[10] Kinneir, *Memoir*, p. 130.

beglerbegī of Kirmānshāh, Luristān and Khūzistān, an extensive bailiwick of great strategic importance, since Kirmānshāh lay athwart the ancient highway to Baghdad and the *ᶜAtabāt*, the Shīᶜī holy places in Mesopotamia: a major thoroughfare for commerce and pilgrimage. The need to assert control over a large and turbulent tribal population provided opportunities for military action on the part of this warlike prince. He could thus enhance his reputation as a commander in the field, while, once pacified, the tribes supplied fine recruits for his private army. In addition, he was the channel of communication between the Tehran government and the powerful Kurdish leader, the Vālī of Ardalān, Amān-Allāh Khān (c. 1800–24), a potential ally. Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā's reputation as a stern administrator, as the creator of an effective military force devoted to his service, and as the pacifier of warlike tribes was enhanced by several spectacular campaigns directed against the vilāyat of Baghdad and one brilliant raid into Russian-held territory. Not surprisingly, he began to appear a serious threat, not only to ᶜAbbās Mīrzā's succession, but to Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh himself.

During the early 19th century, the beglerbegī's main concerns were keeping the peace and collecting revenue. Outside the larger towns, his effectiveness depended upon his ability to cajole or coerce prominent landowners and tribal leaders. In Kirmānshāh, Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā kept the tribes on a tight rein, but in the governments of Iṣfahān and Fārs there were frequent disputes and "incidents" involving the beglerbegī's agents and the local tribal leadership. In urban centres, the provincial administration made its will felt through the town governors and, below them, through the *dārūgha*s and *kalāntar*s, while it depended for support and information at the "grass roots" level upon the *kadkhudā*s of the quarters (see pp. 139–40). Although for day-to-day purposes, the kalāntar and the kadkhudās were the usual channels of communication through which the urban population expressed its anxieties and grievances to their rulers, an alternative source of information and protest, and even a rival source of authority to the Shah's representatives, lay with the Shīᶜī *ᶜulamā*. Only the most imprudent official would lightly provoke their wrath.

The oppositional role of the ᶜulamā in Qājār Iran is well documented,[11] but while, at one level, opposition to and non-cooperation with the régime by the ᶜulamā was consistent with the belief that, in the absence of the Hidden Imam, exercise of authority by a Shah and his agents was illegitimate, at another, the practical workings of society necessitated some degree of compromise to the

[11] See Algar, *Religion and State*, and Chapter 19 below.

point at which a ruler might be accepted as the Imam's *Nāʾib-Khāṣṣ*, so long as he demonstrated at least a modicum of piety and respect for the ʿulamā. Both Āghā Muḥammad Khān and Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh did this. With Muḥammad Shāh, the third Qājār ruler, with his Ṣūfī leanings and his emotional dependence upon Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī, the situation changed.

However much the ʿulamā were prepared to acquiesce in the *status quo* and work with the agents of government, there were times when an oppressive or exceptionally high-handed governor, or some other high official, clashed with the local religious leadership. Such clashes constituted some of the most serious internal crises with which the Qājār régime had to deal. A classic example of confrontation between the government and a local alliance of ʿulamā and urban malcontents was the virtual taking over of Iṣfahān in the late 1830's by Ḥājjī Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir, supported by the city's *lūṭī*s (bands of ruffians) which only ended with the occupation of Iṣfahān by the troops of its new governor, Manūchihr Khān Muʿtamad al-Daula.[12] Manūchihr Khān was one of a handful of high officials who, in every decade, contributed to the régime's survival. The typical view of Qājār times, which has been reinforced by picturesque anecdotes in the writings of 19th-century European travellers, is that the central bureaucracy was both venal and vicious. It may well have been, but future historians will have to look again at all the evidence, and with more open minds. At present, it is enough to say that there must have been some exceptions: otherwise, it is difficult to understand how the government of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh functioned as effectively as it did, or how Qājār rule survived for so long. Certainly, there were some individuals who continued to fit the mould of the traditional Iranian bureaucrat, and deserve a place beside the ablest servants of the Saljuqs or the Safavids.

One such was Mīrza Buzurg, ʿAbbās Mīrzā's vazīr, who about 1809–10 also became deputy to the *Ṣadr-i aʿẓam* (prime minister), Mīrzā Shafīʿ, and received the honorific title, *Qāʾim-Maqām*. His distinguished career ended when he died of the plague in 1822. Another was his son, Mīrzā Abuʾl-Qāsim, known as the second Qāʾim-Maqām, who assumed his father's offices and titles. He had a hand in negotiating the Treaty of Erzerum of 1823 with the Porte, and also the Treaty of Turkmānchai in 1828, and played a major role in ensuring the accession of Muḥammad Mīrzā, ʿAbbās Mīrzā's eldest son, as Muḥammad Shāh. It was to be his tragedy that the new ruler, whom he served briefly as prime minister,

[12] *Ibid*, pp. 108–13.

disliked his opposition to some of his measures and mistrusted his motives. Muḥammad Shāh had him strangled in 1835.

Another model administrator was Mīrzā ʿAbd al-Vahhāb Iṣfahānī, a celebrated calligrapher and poet whose ancestors had served the Safavids as *ḥakīm*s (doctors). In 1809, he was appointed *munshī al-mamālik* (head of the royal chancellery), and granted the title, Muʿtamad al-Daula. From then until his death in 1829, he seems to have increasingly drawn the most important aspects of government into his own hands. Between 1821 and 1825, he was, in effect, Iran's first minister of foreign affairs. Together with his successor in this position, Ḥājjī Mīrzā Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān, he strongly opposed going to war with Russia in 1826, thereby incurring the enmity of those *mujtahid*s who were urging a *jihād* against the unbelievers, but this did not diminish Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's regard for him. During the last years of his life, he functioned as *de facto* prime minister, although the titular incumbent was ʿAbd-Allāh Khān Amīn al-Daula.[13] The impression which he left on at least some European visitors was favourable to a degree. In 1825, James Baillie Fraser found him, "... beyond all comparison the most eminent man at court for talents, probity, general popularity, and attachment to his master's interest". He describes his manners as simple and emphasizes his honesty and freedom from intrigue. Also, he was able privately to warn the king of the princes' misdemeanours. What is significant is that Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh was willing to listen; and shrewd enough to trust such a man as the one appointed to deal with European diplomats.[14]

Few members of the bureaucracy possessed any knowledge of the state of the world beyond the Iranian frontiers, but one of the exceptions was Ḥājjī Mīrzā Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān, a colourful figure whose unusual career typified the uncertainties of state service under the Qājārs. His father, Mīrzā Muḥammad ʿAlī, an Iṣfahānī by birth, had served Karīm Khān Zand in the military paymaster's office. He had also made a most successful marriage, to the sister of the kalāntar of Shīrāz, Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Khān, the future vazīr of Āghā Muḥammad Khān. Through Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Khān's influence, the son of this marriage, Ḥājjī Mīrzā Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān, became deputy-governor of Shūshtar. However, during the spring of 1801, when Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's vengeance fell upon almost all the members of Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Khān's family, Ḥājjī Mīrzā Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān escaped to Baṣra, undertook the *ḥajj* and then visited Hyderabad in the Deccan, where he became a confidant of the Niẓām, Sikandar Jah (1802–29). On learning

[13] Ḥasan Fasāʾī, *Fārsnāma-yi Nāṣirī*, tr. Busse, p. 191.

[14] Fraser, *op. cit.* I, pp. 147–8. See also Javadi, "ʿAbd-al-Vahhāb Moʾtamed-al-Dawla".

that the Shah had pardoned the surviving members of Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Khān's family, he returned to Shīrāz and briefly entered the service of the beglerbegī, Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā, generally known as Farmān-farmā. He later joined the service of Ḥājjī Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Amīn al-Daula *Mustaufī al-mamālik*, who arranged his appointment as the Shah's first ambassador to the Court of Saint James (1809–11).[15] His mission to London was satirized in Morier's *Adventures of Hajji Baba in England.* He returned to Iran in 1811, in time to assist in negotiating the Treaty of Gulistān with Russia in 1813. In 1815, he was sent on an unsuccessful mission to Saint Petersburg in an effort to secure the restitution of Russian-occupied territory south of the Aras. In 1819, he was despatched on diplomatic business to Constantinople, Vienna, Paris and London. In 1825, he succeeded Mīrzā ʿAbd al-Vahhāb as foreign minister and strongly opposed the 1826–8 war with Russia, although he was to be one of the negotiators of the subsequent Treaty of Turkmānchai. He accompanied Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh on his final journey to Iṣfahān in 1834, and after the beglerbegī of Fārs, Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā Farmān-farmā, had appeared at court to explain his suspicious conduct, and been dismissed from the presence, Ḥājjī Mīrzā Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān, together with ʿAbd-Allāh Khān Amīn al-Daula, was ordered to proceed to Shīrāz with a large military detachment, to collect the overdue taxes and chastise the rebellious Mamassani leader, Valī Khān. Before these instructions could be carried out, however, the Shah died. The expedition never left Iṣfahān.

The disputed succession which ensued placed Ḥājjī Mīrzā Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān, like other high officials, in a quandary. Hating the Valī ʿahd's principal advisor and prospective prime minister, Mīrzā Abuʾl-Qāsim, the second Qāʾim-Maqām, he threw in his lot with ʿAlī Shāh Ẓill al-Sulṭān, another of the late king's sons who, like Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrza, was a contender for the throne. With Muḥammad Shāh's triumphant entry into Tehran, Ḥājjī Mīrzā Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān's position became extremely dangerous. He took *bast* (sanctuary) at Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm, but after the execution of the second Qāʾim-Maqām the new prime minister, Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī, restored him to the foreign ministry (1838–45). Suavity, quick-wittedness, and the resilience of the natural survivor had stood him in good stead, but most Europeans who dealt with him seem to have mistrusted him. Fraser was no exception. He wrote that Ḥasan Khān was less respected and less deserving of respect than any other leading courtier. He despised him as mean and utterly false, while his notoriously dissolute habits disgusted every decent person at court.[16]

[15] Fraser's description of his promotion to ambassadorial rank is less than flattering. *Op. cit.* 1, pp. 149–50.

[16] *Ibid*, Vol. 1, p. 150. See also Javadi, "Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān Īlčī".

The careers of Mīrzā Buzurg Qāʾim-Maqām, his son, Mīrzā Abuʾl-Qāsim, Mīrzā ᶜAbd al-Vahhāb Muᶜtamad al-Daula, and Ḥajjī Mīrzā Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān exemplified aspects of the profession of the traditional *mīrzā*. Another successful career, illustrating a rather different but also long-established way of climbing the ladder to royal favour, was that of the influential Georgian eunuch, Manūchihr Khān Gurjī. A trusted household slave and confidant of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh, he rose within the palace hierarchy to be *Īshīk Āqāsī Bāshī* (court chamberlain). In that capacity he acted with Hājjī Mīrzā Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān, the foreign minister, as an advisor to ᶜAbbās Mīrzā in the negotiations preceding the Treaty of Turkmānchai. Following the death of ᶜAbd al-Vahhāb Muᶜtamad al-Daula in 1829, the Shah bestowed the latter's title on Manūchihr Khān and thereafter he seems to have functioned as what today would be described as an official "trouble-shooter", a rôle which he continued to play after Muḥammad Shāh's accession in 1834. Thus in 1835, following the refusal of the new Shah's uncle, Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā Farmān-farmā, to acknowledge his nephew's accession, Manūchihr Khān, acting on behalf of the governor-designate of Fārs, Fīrūz Mīrzā, the new Shah's younger brother, marched on Shīrāz, accompanied by troops under the command of Sir Henry Lindsay Bethune. Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā was arrested and the authority of the central government swiftly re-asserted. The punitive expedition against the Mamassani ordered by Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh on the eve of his death was now undertaken with exemplary brutality.

Two years later, Muḥammad Shāh appointed Manūchihr Khān to be beglerbegī of Kirmānshāh, Luristān and Khūzistān in place of the Shah's brother, Bahrām Mīrzā Muᶜizz al-Daula. Then, in 1839–40, as a consequence of protracted unrest in Iṣfahān, where the mujtahid, Ḥājjī Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir, helped by the city's lūṭīs, had severely damaged the central government's authority, the province of ᶜIrāq-i ᶜAjam was added to Manūchihr Khān's already great responsibilities. He became in effect the viceroy of much of central and south-western Iran. Firmness restored order in Iṣfahān. Many lūṭīs were executed, even those promised safe-conducts. Ḥājjī Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir was inviolable, but no longer a serious menance.[17] After showing that he would not tolerate recalcitrance even among the ᶜulamā, Manūchihr Khān crushed an incipient demonstration of insubordination by the Bakhtiyārī chieftain, Muḥammad Taqī Khān. Henry Layard detested Manūchihr Khān for his

[17] Algar, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–113. See also de Bode, *Travels in Luristan and Arabistan* I, pp. 49–51. For a brief description of Manūchihr Khān's career, see Flandin and Coste, Vol. II, pp. 30–8. For his dealings with the Bāb, see Algar, *op. cit.*, pp. 141–2, and Browne, *A Traveller's Narrative* II, pp. 11–13 and 263–5.

treatment of his Bakhtiyārī friends, but grudgingly acknowledged the effectiveness of his methods.[18]

Until his death in 1847, Manūchihr Khān continued tightly to control his enormous bailiwick. He governed in Iṣfahān in style, but was ever ready to lead his troops into the surrounding regions to discipline refractory tribes. He also seems to have been aware of the upheavals likely to follow the Shah's death. He anticipated them by creating a following amenable to his views in the Shah's household. In the 1840s he appeared one of the most powerful men in the country. It is said that on one occasion he was summoned to Tehran by Muḥammad Shāh, who remarked, "I have heard that you are like a king in Iṣfahān", to which he replied, "Yes, Your Majesty, that is true, and you must have such kings as your governors, in order to enjoy the title of King of Kings."[19] Like most effective Qājār officials, he combined ability and energy with avarice and cruelty, but as often happened, the more positive aspects of his work quickly vanished with his departure from the scene. What the Qājār administrative system pre-eminently lacked was continuity and consistency in its leadership, without which a bureaucracy cannot be said to be truly institutionalised.[20]

Under Āghā Muḥammad Khān, the civil administration of the kingdom had been quite rudimentary, but the situation changed with the accession of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh. Whether by design or in response to need, the number of office-holders began to proliferate. This process continued until, during the reign of Muḥammad Shāh, Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī enlarged their numbers beyond all bounds with his reckless promotion of his kinsmen and protégés. Under Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, a mustaufī al-mamālik (controller-general) was appointed, with a number of mustaufīs subordinate to him. The importance of this office is indicated by the relatively lengthy tenure of successive incumbents, demonstrating the need for continuity and for mastery of the expertise traditionally associated with exchequer procedures and the techniques of *siyāq*, the notation used by the revenue officials. The growing complexity of the military establishment meant the creation of the post of *vazīr-i lashkar* (chief muster-master). In addition, there were established the offices of *munshī al-mamālik*, to oversee the royal chancery, of *muʿaiyir al-mamālik* (mintmaster), and of *ṣāḥib-i dīvān-khāna*,

[18] Layard, *Khūzistān*, p. 5. For an extended account of Manūchihr Khān's dealings with the Bakhtiyārī, see Layard, *Early Adventures*. A recent summary of these relations can be found in Garthwaite, pp. 66–75. [19] Browne, *A Year Amongst the Persians*, p. 219.

[20] For recent discussion of the Qājār bureaucracy, see Ervand Abrahamian, "Oriental Despotism"; Bakhash, "The Evolution of Qajar Bureaucracy"; and Meredith, "Early Qajar Administration".

whose duties seem to have included authorization of the disbursement of funds. These offices, or more accurately, their functions were not new: most were rooted in Safavid administrative practice. But with the decay of bureaucratic institutions during the troubles of the 18th century and with Āghā Muḥammad Khān's preference for only the minimum clerical activity, such ministerial positions had to be resuscitated.[21]

This was most obviously the case with the office of the principal vazīr, or prime minister. A total of seven served the first two Shahs of the 19th century: Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Khān (1795–1801); Mīrzā Shafīᶜ (1801–19); Ḥājjī Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Amīn al-Daula (1819–23); ᶜAbd-Allāh Khān Amīn al-Daula (1823–5); Allāh-Yār Khān Qājār Develū Āṣaf al-Daula (1825–8); ᶜAbd-Allāh Khān Amīn al-Daula (1828–34, second term of office); Mīrzā Abuʾl-Qāsim Qāʾim-Maqām (1834–5); and Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī (1835–48). The first Qājār prime minister, Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Khān, was given the title of *Iᶜtimād al-Daula*, a relic of Safavid times. In 1801, he was put to death in the cruellest possible manner by Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh, warned by his predecessor not to trust the man who had betrayed the Zands. The title of Iᶜtimād al-Daula remained unused again until Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's time and his second prime minister, Mīrzā Āghā Khān Nūrī, in 1851. Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh revived the title *Ṣadr-i Aᶜẓam*. After the dismissal of the second Amīn al-Daula – the first had been his father, who was also Ṣadr-i Aᶜẓam – in 1825, he was, uncharacteristically, replaced by a Qājār nobleman, Allāh-Yār Khān Qajār Develū Āsaf al-Daula. Neither he nor his predecessor were designated Ṣadr-i Aᶜẓam, but had chief minister's functions. In 1826 the Shah sent Allāh-Yār Khān to join the Valī ᶜahd, ᶜAbbās Mīrzā, on the Russian front where he campaigned with the Crown Prince, was captured when the Russians took Tabrīz in October 1827, but released in time for the negotiations at Turkmānchai. Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh appears to have blamed him for inciting the Valī ᶜahd to undertake what had proved to be a disastrous war,[22] and at Naurūz, 1828, restored ᶜAbd-Allāh Khān Amīn al-Daula as first minister, hence his being with the Shah on the latter's death in 1834. But he failed to support Muḥammad Shāh's accession and was later exiled to the ᶜAtabāt, the Holy Places in Mesopotomia, where he died in 1847, having had all his property in Iran confiscated.[23]

As has been said, Muḥammad Shāh's first prime minister was Mīrzā Abuʾl-

[21] An interesting example of this process was the way in which the Safavid office of *Vakīl-i Vazīr-i Aᶜẓam* (deputy of the principal vazir) re-emerged in the title of *Qāʾim-Maqām*, which while granted to the *vazīr* of the *Valīᶜahd*, normally resident in Tabrīz, conveyed the idea of a *locum tenens* to the *Ṣadr-i Aᶜẓam*. [22] See Avery, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–9. [23] See Amanat, "Amīn-al-Dawla".

Qāsim Qāʾim-Maqām, whom he soon had strangled. The appointment followed immediately of Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī, who was born in Erivan in 1783–4 and had studied Sufism and theology in the ᶜAtabāt and become a favourite at the court of ᶜAbbās Mīrzā, to whose son he become both tutor and *murshid* (spiritual guide). Thus he exercised an extraordinary influence over his former pupil; he was to be the virtual ruler of the kingdom from 1835 until Muḥammad Shāh's death in 1848.

This brief review of those who held the office of prime minister between 1797 and 1848 suggests a greater deal of administrative continuity, at the highest level, than might otherwise have been supposed. Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh had five prime ministers in thirty-seven years (with one serving two terms of office) and Muḥammad Shāh, two in fourteen years. Several of these men were, by common report, persons of real capacity. Malcolm, writing in 1815, found it hard to describe these Iranian prime ministers' functions precisely. He said that their duties depended on how much of their sovereign's favour and confidence they enjoyed, and on the king's indolence or competence. He added that they were at the mercy of royal caprice and preoccupied with waiting on the king, and "the intricacies of private intrigues"; their lives and property were "always in peril".[24]

No permanent ministries or designated offices for the high officials of state existed. Insecurity of tenure and the prime minister's lack of a regular place in which to transact business, and his need to keep near the royal presence, reinforced foreign observers' impression of the capricious and idiosyncratic character of Iranian government under the Qājārs.

The insouciance which European observers attributed to the conduct of the civil administration extended to that of the military. The general perception was that, with the death of Āghā Muḥammad Khān, there had been a rapid deterioration in the fighting capacity of the armed forces, and that thereafter and for the remainder of the period of Qājār rule, their performance left much to be desired. Against this pessimistic assessment, several British officers seconded to ᶜAbbās Mīrzā's service pointed out that, on occasion, units of the cavalry performed well when led by a trusted commander. Against superior European discipline and technology, however, Iranian units generally performed poorly,

[24] Malcolm, *History* II, pp. 435–6. It is interesting to compare with this passage, Minorsky's on the functions of the Safavid *Vazīr-i Aᶜẓam*: "... the duties of the Grand Vizier may be summarized as follows: he confirmed all the official appointments, from the highest ranks to the lowest; he administered the state finance and controlled all the operations with the revenue; he checked the legality of procedure of all the officials of state ... foreign policy, including negotiations with ambassadors, the signing of treaties, etc.". Minorsky, *Tadhkīrat al-Mulūk*, p. 115.

though often with great courage, as in both the wars with Russia. It was largely a matter of mismanagement and indiscipline, and in this regard, the European-officered battalions of ʿAbbās Mīrzā's *Niẓām-i Jadīd* (new army) did not perform much better than the traditional militias and tribal units. The British envoy, Sir Harford Jones, observed that units trained by British officers on European lines were less impressive than the mounted irregular levies trained and equipped by Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā.[25]

The size and effectiveness of the army under Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh and Muḥammad Shāh fluctuated in response to need and fiscal exigency. It was organized into two distinct sections: traditional forces dating from the time of Āghā Muḥammad Khān, and units on the European model favoured by ʿAbbās Mīrzā. The traditional part comprised three categories of troops: royal ghulāms, irregular tribal levies, and the militia. The ghulāms were the Shah's personal bodyguard of well-armed and well-mounted horsemen, many of them Georgian slaves, commanded by young Qājār nobles. In the 1820s they numbered between three and four thousand men. Similar establishments on a smaller scale were maintained by provincial governors; those ruling over particularly turbulent or exposed provinces, such as Khurāsān or Kirmānshāh, maintained what were in effect personal armies.

Secondly, there were the irregular cavalry levies provided by the tribes, usually under the command of their respective chieftains. Theoretically, these levies were at the Shah's disposal in time of need. In practice, only certain tribes were consistently dependable. Thirdly, was the militia raised by the provincial and city governors among a population which was still armed to the teeth, although lacking formal training or discipline. Among the provincial militias, those of Māzandarān and Astarābād were regarded as particularly formidable.

Taken as a whole, these units were adequate for maintaining a sporadic kind of order throughout the kingdom, especially if they were led by a leader like Āghā Muḥammad Khān; to withstand the Russians, something more was needed. Hence ʿAbbās Mīrzā's regular troops, trained and equipped after the European manner. These regulars were first instructed by French officers, and then by British, as well as some Russian renegades and other European soldiers of fortune. After the Treaty of Gulistān, this new army, the Niẓām-i Jadīd, comprised horse-artillery with twenty field-pieces, 12,000 regular cavalry, and 12,000 regular infantry. The last consisted of twelve battalions with a nominal strength of a thousand men in each. They were grouped into nine regiments

[25] Brydges, pp. 255–6.

according to tribe or region. According to Malcolm, writing in 1815, they consisted of 2,000 Afshārs, 2,000 Shaqāqīs, 1,000 Dunbulīs, 1,000 Muqaddams, 1,000 Kangarlūs, 1,000 men from Qarājadāgh, 1,000 from Tabrīz, 2,000 from Marand and 1,000 from the Khanate of Erivan.[26] Fraser, a few years later, listed 2,000 Shaqāqīs, 2,000 from Qarājadāgh, 2,000 from Tabrīz, 1,000 from Marand, 1,000 from Khūy, 1,000 from Marāgha, 1,000 from Urmīya, 1,000 from the Khanate of Nakhchivān, and 1,000 grenadiers, described as the Russian battalion, perhaps because it was largely officered by Russian deserters.[27] Whatever the precise composition of the individual regiments, however, it is clear that the Niẓām-i Jadīd was recruited almost exclusively from Āẕarbāījān and the neighbouring Khanates. This was ʿAbbās Mīrzā's own army, but in addition to it, the Shah supposedly maintained a parallel military establishment, composed of regular infantry, cavalry and horse-artillery. By all accounts this was something of a token force, less well-trained, less disciplined and invariably below strength. The only units of it which earned praise from British officers were two battalions of Bakhtiyārī tribesmen.[28]

The presence of European officers as instructors with the Iranian army was a direct consequence of the way in which European Great Power rivalries during the era of the Napoleonic Wars had penetrated Iran. It is with the diplomatic wrangling of British, French and Russian envoys at the court of the Shah, and Iran's two disastrous armed conflicts with Russia, that the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh is most frequently associated; or, to put it another way, in so far as the reign is regarded as being of significance, it is because it marks the first phase of Iran's painful encounter with the West. This perception of the reign, however, is largely conditioned by the wisdom of hindsight and a Eurocentric vision of world history. It is by no means certain that Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh and his Iranian contemporaries would have interpreted the age in which they lived in such a way. For in many respects, conditions in Iran during the reigns of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh and Muḥammad Shāh differed hardly at all from those of the preceding century. Early 19th-century Iran was still a traditional, deeply conservative society, little affected inwardly by its often disagreeable encounters with the European powers, and devoted to its Shīʿī faith and the preservation of Islamic values. The Qājār Shahs, all-powerful autocrats though they seemed, lacking any spiritual charisma were forced to conciliate the ʿulamā and demonstrate piety through charitable endowments and the building or repair of mosques and *madrasas* (see pp. 910–12). Malcolm, who paid close attention to the religious institutions of

[26] Malcolm, *History* II, p. 499.
[27] Fraser, *op. cit.* I, p. 226.
[28] Malcolm, *History* II, p. 500.

Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh's Iran, recognized the singular importance of the mujtahids in that society when he wrote: "The ecclesiastical class, which includes the priests who officiate in the offices of religion, and those who expound the law as laid down in the Koran and the books of traditions, are deemed, by the defenceless part of the population, as the principal shield between them and the absolute authority of their monarch. The superiors of this class enjoy a consideration that removes them from those personal apprehensions to which almost all others are subject. The people have a right to appeal to them in all ordinary cases, where there appears an outrage against law and justice, unless when the disturbed state of the country calls for the exercise of military power."[29]

European travellers in Iran in the 19th century frequently failed to see the wood for the trees, but in Malcolm's case, he was able to describe the unique position of the senior ᶜulamā in relation to society as a whole. "It is not easy", he wrote, "to describe persons who fill no office, receive no appointment, who have no specific duties, but who are called, from their superior learning, piety and virtue, by the silent but unanimous suffrage of the inhabitants of the country in which they live, to be their guides in religion, and their protectors against the violence and oppression of their rulers, and who receive from those by whose feelings they are elevated a respect and duty which lead the proudest kings to join the popular voice, and to pretend, if they do not feel, a veneration for the man who has attained this sacred rank. There are seldom more than three or four priests of the dignity of Mooshtahed (*sic*) in Persia. Their conduct is expected to be exemplary, and to show no worldly bias; neither must they connect themselves with the king or the officers of the government. They seldom depart from that character to which they owe their rank . . . When a mooshtahed dies, his successor is always a person of the most eminent rank in the ecclesiastical order; and, though he may be pointed out to the populace by others of the same class seeking him as an associate, it is rare to hear of any intrigues being employed to obtain this enviable dignity."[30]

Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh endeavoured to present himself as a pious, God-fearing ruler who listened to the words of the ᶜulamā and set an example as the fount of justice and charity. His sons followed his example. In the case of Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā, for example, the prince's intended assault on Baghdad was turned aside in 1804 and again in 1812 by the pleas of Shaikh Jaᶜfar Najafī; in 1818, he accepted the mediation of Āghā Aḥmad Kirmānshāhī of Karbalā in a dispute with Sulaimān Pāshā, the ruler of the Baghdad *vilāyat*. In 1821, he withdrew from

[29] *Ibid*, II, pp. 429–30. [30] *Ibid*, II, pp. 443–4.



Map 5. Iran's territorial losses during the reign of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh

Baghdad at the behest of Shaikh Mūsā Najafī, a son of Shaikh Jaᶜfar. The good will of these three mujtahids of the ᶜAtabāt was more important than victory in the field, although it is possible that in each case retreat was also a face-saving device. Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā also followed his father's example in extending his hospitality to Shaikh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī, the celebrated Baḥrainī mendicant later denounced for his infidelity (*kufr*), during two protracted stays in Kirmānshāh. The Shaikh was granted an annual pension of 700 *tūmāns* and later "sold" the prince one of the gates of Paradise, the bill of sale for which was to be wrapped in the latter's shroud.[31] Not surprisingly, ministers and courtiers emulated the conduct of the royal family towards the ᶜulamā. In some respects, and within the constraints implicit in the doctrine of the Hidden Imam's exercise of sovereignty, Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh could pose as an acceptable Nāʾib-Khāṣṣ (Special Deputy) of the *Ṣāḥib al-Zamān* (Lord of the Age: the Hidden Imam).

[31] For these examples of Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā's piety, see Algar, *op. cit.*, pp. 54 and 68–70.

Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's reign falls into five phases. First, the years of consolidation between 1797 and 1804, when, had he demonstrated sufficient energy, he might have integrated northern and eastern Khurāsān with the rest of the kingdom, pacified the Türkmens beyond the Atrak, and perhaps annexed Marv or Herat. Instead, he only undertook desultory military progresses which achieved little and were called off with the approach of autumn, when the Shah hurried back to his capital. Secondly, the phase of the first war with Russia, from 1804 to 1813, and of the diplomatic wooing of Iran, first by France and then by Great Britain, which both flattered the court and aroused its greed, only in the end to provoke disillusion. The war did not go on continuously, and not all the news was bad, but the cost was ruinous and, by the time that it was all over, the new dynasty had been profoundly humiliated.

During the third phase, the thirteen years between 1813 and 1826, the court nursed its wounds, consumed the British subsidy and sought to compensate its loss of prestige by attacking less dangerous neighbours. One of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's younger sons, Ḥasan ʿAlī Mīrzā Shujāʿ al-Salṭana, who had recently replaced his brother, Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā, as beglerbegī of Khurāsān, defeated a force of Afghans at Kafir Qilaʿ in 1818, while in the same year Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, beglerbegī of Kirmānshāh, raided Ottoman Kurdistān. In 1820 war was formally declared between the Ottoman Sultan and the Shah, and both Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, operating from Kirmānshāh, and ʿAbbās Mīrzā, from his base at Tabrīz, launched attacks on Ottoman territory. Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā made a successful advance towards Baghdad, but was forced to fall back by a cholera epidemic to which he himself fell victim in November 1821. ʿAbbās Mīrzā distinguished himself by taking Bayazit and Toprak Qalʿa, and moving on towards Erzerum, while a second column captured Bitlis and advanced towards Diyarbakr. The Ottoman counter-attack was repelled by ʿAbbās Mīrzā at Khūy (May 1822), but the cholera was by now also raging through his army, and he therefore opted for peace, which was signed at Erzerum in the following July. The war against the Ottomans had provided a much-needed boost to the hitherto sagging reputation of the Valī ʿahd, but had not removed the main preoccupation of the court: the continuous rivalries among the Shāhzādas and the way in which these rivalries might affect the succession.

In theory, of course, this matter had already been settled, at the time of the marriage of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh (then himself heir-apparent) to ʿAbbās Mīrzā's mother. This marriage, with the subsequent birth of ʿAbbās Mīrzā, had been part of Āghā Muḥammad Khān's grand design for the perpetuation of the dynasty. In reality, however, there was no such thing as a fixed law of succession:

at Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh's death, it would be a case of the survival of the fittest. During the first half of the reign, the most obvious threat to ᶜAbbās Mīrzā's succession had come from Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā in Kirmānshāh. Fortunately for ᶜAbbās Mīrzā, however, and perhaps for Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh too, the cholera epidemic of 1821 removed Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā from the scene.[32]

Other contenders remained. Two of the most dangerous were Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā Farmān-farmā, beglerbegī of Fārs (1799–1835), and his full-brother, Ḥasan ᶜAlī Mīrzā Shujāᶜ al-Salṭana, beglerbegī of Khurāsān (c. 1816/17–1823), and of Kirmān (1827/8–1835). The former was the same age as ᶜAbbās Mīrzā; he ruled a comparatively remote and rich satrapy; and among his subjects were warlike and turbulent tribes who, half a century earlier, had been among the bulwarks of Zand ascendancy. Fārs, moreover, had a tradition of going its own way, and since Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Khān and his family had aroused the resentment of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh in 1801, the Shīrāzīs had been viewed with suspicion at court. Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā and his entourage were regarded as congenital intriguers, and were as closely scrutinized as possible. During the last five years of his reign, the Shah felt compelled on three separate occasions to attend personally to the affairs of Fārs: in 1829, when he himself went to Shīrāz; in 1831, when he went as far as Iṣfahān and summoned Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā to his presence; and in 1834, when he again went to Iṣfahān (on the eve of his death) and after receiving Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā in audience, despatched the prime minister and other high officials to Shīrāz to enquire into the state of the province.

Ḥasan ᶜAlī Mīrzā Shujāᶜ al-Salṭana was a younger man than Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā, but the size and importance of his charge, Khurāsān, made him a person of great consequence, not least because both the turbulence of the province and its exposure to Afghan and Türkmen raiders required the beglerbegī to maintain a considerable military establishment. This, in turn, provided opportunities for the beglerbegī to acquire a martial reputation. Ḥasan ᶜAlī Mīrzā had fought the Afghans in 1818 at Kafir Qilaᶜ and claimed a great victory (or so it was reported in Tehran, although there is some uncertainty as to the actual outcome of the engagement). During the course of the 1820–2 war with the Ottomans, rumours reached the court of disaffection on the part of both Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā and

[32] Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh may have regarded Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā as a potential rival and would not have been happy with the opinion that the prince "is thought by many to be the most powerful of all the governors in the empire, not excepting the Shah himself"; Buckingham, *Travels* I, p. 178. When news of the prince's death reached Tehran, Fraser noted with surprise the apparent lack of grief on the part of the Shah; *op. cit.* I, pp. 148–9. It was obvious to all that the death of Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā, while dashing the hopes of his faction at court, had greatly reduced the threat of a disputed succession; *ibid.* I, pp. 145–6. For Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh's supposed suspicions of ᶜAbbas Mīrzā, see Fowler, *Three Years in Persia* II, pp. 11 and 38–9.

Ḥasan ʿAlī Mīrzā. Whatever the truth behind these rumours, the signing of the peace treaty at Erzerum and the enhanced reputation of ʿAbbās Mīrzā as a result of his performance in the field probably alerted the two brothers to their danger. Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā urged that both of them should hasten to court and refute the charges which were being levelled against them. Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā appeared in Tehran in December 1822 and Ḥasan ʿAlī Mīrzā in March 1823. The former was exculpated and returned to Shīrāz, but the latter was stripped of his governorship and sent into internal exile. He accompanied Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā as far as Iṣfahān and there he remained in relative obscurity for several years until he was restored to favour and appointed governor of Kirmān.

This was by no means an isolated case of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's willingness to chastise wayward sons. Ḥasan ʿAlī Mīrzā's predecessor as beglerbegī of Khurāsān, Muḥammad Valī Mīrza, had been treated with even greater severity. Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā was another of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's sons to be born in the same year as Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, ʿAbbās Mīrzā, and Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā. In the autumn of 1802, the Shah, in the course of besieging Mashhad, which had been seized by Nādir Mīrzā, the son of the last Afsharid, Shāhrukh, appointed Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā beglerbegī of Khurāsān and, himself returning to Tehran, left his son to continue the investment of the city, which early in 1803 opened its gates to the besiegers. Some years later, Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā imprudently lavished favours upon the ambitious chieftain, Isḥāq Khān of Turbat-i Ḥaidarī, even appointing him *sardār* (commander) of his troops. Emboldened by these favours, Isḥāq Khān openly dared to challenge the authority of the beglerbegī, plotted to make himself independent with the assistance of other rebellious chiefs and with help from the Afghans (which was denied him), and eventually made his master his prisoner. Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā managed to escape and make his way to Tehran, where he secured the Shah's approval for the assassination of Isḥāq Khān and his sons, which in due course was carried out. However, thereafter the affairs of Khurāsān degenerated into such chaos that Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh was forced to intervene and replace Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā with his brother, Ḥasan ʿAlī Mīrzā. Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā was recalled to Tehran in disgrace. Inflamed by treatment which he regarded as unjust, he burst into his father's presence with his sword drawn and abused him. For this, he was beaten and driven out of the palace. The prince was unemployed and penurious for two or three years until sent to govern Yazd.[33]

[33] Fraser, II, p. 28. As governor of Yazd, Muḥammad Valī Mīrzā proved to be the worst kind of Qājār proconsul, but even before his arrival in Yazd, that province had not been well served by its rulers; as a case-study it may be fairly typical. See *ibid.* II, pp. 23–4.

The fourth phase of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's reign comprised the brief, but disastrous 1826–8 war with Russia, followed by the Treaty of Turkmānchai. It may be conjectured that the immediate causes of this conflict were ʿAbbās Mīrzā's need to restore a reputation tarnished by earlier defeat at the hands of the infidels, the pressure to renew the struggle put upon him by the prime minister, Allāh-Yār Khān Qājār, and the campaign for a jihād mounted by mujtahids such as Āghā Sayyid Muḥammad Iṣfahānī.[34] Certainly, had the Iranians gained a victory, ʿAbbās Mīrzā would have been its greatest beneficiary, but the second war with Russia was even more disastrous than the first, although briefer and therefore less costly. It is true that by the terms of the Treaty of Turkmānchai, ʿAbbās Mīrzā could anticipate Russian assistance in his succession to the throne, but that hardly offset the immediate humiliation of military defeat. It is not surprising that, on his return from Turkmānchai, the prime minister who had encouraged the Valī ʿahd to go to war was replaced by the more prudent and dependable ʿAbd-Allāh Khān Amīn al-Daula. The question now was what could be done to improve ʿAbbās Mīrzā's prospects for a peaceful succession. This preoccupation continued throughout the last phase of the reign, from 1828 to 1834, and goes far to explain the old Shah's insistence on bringing the insubordinate administration in Fārs to order.

After Turkmānchai ʿAbbās Mīrzā's position was more precarious *vis-à-vis* his fraternal rivals. Moreover, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's many grandchildren were now of age, which meant that there would be additional contenders for the throne. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh had rarely been able to keep his sons in line. In this last phase of the reign, his reputation tarnished, as was the Valī ʿahd's, as a result of the recent defeats, he was even more hard-pressed to maintain a semblance of dynastic unity. Almost everywhere in the south, the south-west, and the south-east, unrest threatened.

In 1831, the Shah had to set out from Tehran, as he had been forced to do in 1829 when he marched on Shīrāz. This time it was to reconcile one of his sons, Muḥammad Taqī Mīrzā Ḥusām al-Salṭana, the governor of Burūjird, and his grandson, Muḥammad Ḥusain Mīrzā Ḥishmat al-Daula, governor of Kirmānshāh. This accomplished, he travelled to Iṣfahān, again primarily to investigate the affairs of Fārs. Earlier that same year, ʿAbbās Mīrzā had joined the court from Tabrīz and had been sent to quell the disturbances in Yazd and Kirmān. He now came from Kirmān to the Shah's camp near Iṣfahān and was appointed beglerbegī of Khurāsān, although he continued to retain the office of

[34] See Avery, *op. cit.*, and Algar, *op. cit.*, pp. 82–9.

beglerbegī of Āẕarbāījān, which was placed in the charge of one of his younger sons, Farīdūn Mīrzā.

The appointment of the Valī ᶜahd to be beglerbegī of Khurāsān was a decision of great significance. Khurāsān offered refractory chieftains to be brought into line, Türkmen raiders to be punished, and laurels to be won in conquering Marv or Herat. Moreover, there had long lingered around the person of the Valī ᶜahd the suspicion that he was not a good Muslim. It was not solely that he had twice been forced to make peace with the infidel Russians. In Āẕarbāījān, he had acquired a dangerous reputation for innovation, for acquiring Western novelties, and for hobnobbing with Frankish doctors, diplomats and soldiers. In Mashhad, a shrine city, he could appear pious. He embarked on his new charge with the vigour unexpected in one who had long been in poor health.[35] During the summer and autumn of 1832 he campaigned vigorously against rebellious chieftains in an arc stretching from Qūchān to Turbat-i Ḥaidarī, and staged a massacre of Türkmens at Sarakhs. He visited Tehran in the summer of the following year, but was soon back in Mashhad, having sent ahead orders to his eldest son, Muḥammad Mīrzā, to prepare for an expedition against Herat, or perhaps Marv. As it was, he died in Mashhad in October 1833 and was buried in the shrine of Imām Riẓā. He was only forty-four.

Whatever expectations ᶜAbbās Mīrzā's death may have raised amongst his erstwhile rivals, Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh proceeded with the succession policy prescribed by his predecessor. He nominated ᶜAbbās Mīrzā's eldest son, Muḥammad Mīrzā, heir-apparent, granted him the title of Nāᵓib al-Salṭana, appointed him beglerbegī of Āẕarbāījān and Khurāsān, and at Naurūz 1834, summoned him to Tehran from Mashhad, where he had been with his late father, and formally installed him as the new Valī ᶜahd. Muḥammad Mīrzā then departed for Tabrīz, and the Shah set out for Iṣfahān in early autumn, on the last journey of his reign. He died in Iṣfahān in October 1834.

Among the members of the Shah's entourage there was anxiety that the news of his death might be the signal for civil war, especially as he had died outside the capital. As a temporary expedient, therefore, his body was placed in a litter as if he were still alive, and, accompanied by the royal harem and the household servants, was hurriedly taken to Qum, to be buried close to the shrine of Fāṭima, sister of the Eighth Imam. Only then was the news of his death published. Already, messengers had been despatched to Tabrīz to warn Muḥammad Mīrzā, the Valī ᶜahd. Despite these precautions, the reign of Muḥammad Shāh opened

[35] Volodarsky, "Persia's Foreign Policy", p. 114.

with rival contenders staking their claims to the throne. The new ruler, supported by both the British and Russian envoys, hastened to Tehran and celebrated his formal accession in January 1835. Meanwhile, as had long been expected, Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā Farmān-farmā in Shīrāz arranged to have himself proclaimed Shah. Shortly afterwards, he was joined by his younger brother, Ḥasan ᶜAlī Mīrzā Shujāᶜ al-Salṭana. However, as has already been related, Manūchihr Khān Muᶜtamad al-Daula was sent by Muḥammad Shāh to crush this revolt, and he did so with such effectiveness and brutality that Fārs, at least, was quickly secured. Both rebel princes were despatched to Tehran. Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā died there three months later, supposedly of the plague. Ḥasan ᶜAlī Mīrza was blinded on arrival, but lived on as a captive until 1852–3.

Another son of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh, ᶜAlī Shāh Ẓill al-Sulṭān, the governor of Tehran, also briefly aspired to the throne, but faced with the *fait accompli* of Muḥammad Shāh's triumphal progress from Tabrīz, he swiftly capitulated and was granted the honour of attending his nephew's coronation. Away from the capital, and especially in the south and south-west, news of the old Shah's death provided a pretext for disorderly conduct, if not outright insurrection. In Kirmānshāh province, Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā's son, Muḥammad Ḥusain Mīrzā, had ruled as beglerbegī since 1821 (apart from an interval between 1826 and 1829). The news that his grandfather was dead placed him in a quandary. He himself seems to have lacked either the capacity or the ambition to make a bid for the throne but, in any case, he no longer possessed the military establishment which had been his father's pride. He had also long since dissipated the good will of those tribes with which his father had been on such excellent terms. Relatively isolated in Kirmānshāh, it was impossible for him to estimate the comparative strengths of the three contending parties. Hence, he sent off assurances of loyalty to his cousin, Muḥammad Shāh, supposedly still in Tabrīz, to ᶜAlī Shāh Ẓill al-Sultān in Tehran, and to Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā Farmān-farmā in Shīrāz.[36] Meanwhile, although the city of Kirmānshāh remained quiet, all the country in the direction of Hamadān, and south as far as Shūshtar, was ablaze, as the Failī, Lur and Bakhtiyārī tribes sought to make the most of what promised to be a long and troubled interregnum. Predictably, Muḥammad Ḥusain Mīrzā's attempts to maintain good standing with all three parties failed miserably, and no sooner was Muḥammad Shāh securely in control than he despatched his brother, Bahrām Mīrzā Muᶜizz al-Daula, to replace him. The new beglerbegī reached Kirmānshāh in January 1835. Muḥammad Ḥusain Mīrzā, who had taken

[36] Fraser, *Koordistan* I, p. 350. For relations with the Gūrān, see Fraser, *ibid.* II, p. 187; Keppel, II, pp. 57–8; and D.N. MacKenzie, "Gūrān", *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, new ed., II, pp. 1139–40.

sanctuary in the house of the city *pīsh-namāz* (leader of the congregational prayers), was seized and sent to Tehran. He ended his days as a prisoner in the citadel of Ardabīl, along with other members of the royal family considered potential threats to the new régime.[37]

Muḥammad Shāh ruled for fourteen years, and in most respects his administration did not constitute a significant break with the style of government of the previous reign, except in the important area of relations with the ᶜulamā. As a ruler, Muḥammad Shāh has not received much praise, least of all among British writers who, outraged at his attempts to re-integrate Herat into his kingdom by force, denounced him as a Russian pawn. The Russians certainly encouraged him; they preferred Iranian attention to be turned eastwards. But the fact is that in his attitude to the Herat question, Muḥammad Shāh was only pursuing what had been the aim of all his predecessors. It was in direct continuation of the avowed intentions of his father, ᶜAbbās Mīrzā, that he first campaigned against the Türkmens in the summer of 1836 and then advanced against Herat late in the following year.[38] There followed a desultory siege of several months, during which he never really came close to dislodging Yār Muḥammad, the energetic vazīr of Kamrān Shāh Durrānī. He was, however, exposed to intensely hostile pressure from the British, and in the autumn of 1838 he abandoned the siege. Not that Herat was thereafter forgotten: the British imbroglio in Kabul during the First Afghan War, their subsequent disinclination to get involved in Afghan affairs, and the long years of Yār Muḥammad's rule as sole master of Herat (1842–51) provided opportunities for the pursuit of intermittent but not unfriendly contacts between the Tehran and Herat durbars.

In Iran itself, affairs did not go well: the southern provinces of the kingdom were frequently in a state of semi-revolt, encouraged by the intrigues of those members of the Qājār royal family who now lived in exile in Baghdad. They had a hand in the 1838 rebellion of Āghā Khān Maḥallātī in Yazd and Kirmān, which eventually resulted in the relocation of the Ismāᶜīlī leadership in Bombay. The Baghdad exiles enjoyed a heightened importance because, for much of the reign, relations between Iran and the Ottoman Empire were strained to breaking-point on account of border disputes, notably over Muḥammara on the Shaṭṭ al-ᶜArab estuary, and the treatment of Shīᶜī pilgrims passing through Ottoman territory. War nearly broke out on at least two occasions: when the Pasha of Baghdad attacked Muḥammara in 1838, during the months when the Iranians were preoccupied with the siege of Herat, and again in 1843, when Muḥammad Najīb

[37] Fraser, *Koordistan* I, pp. 322 and 351, and II, pp. 162, 291.
[38] Volodarsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–14.

Pāshā's entry into Karbalā, for the purpose of crushing the local lūṭīs, who had turned the city into a sanctuary for criminals, resulted in a general massacre of the inhabitants.[39] Both the British and Russian missions intervened to prevent war between the two states, and their good offices led to the opening of a conference at Erzerum in 1843, at which all four governments were represented. Its deliberations continued intermittently for nearly four years, but by June 1847 a treaty was concluded which, although far from satisfactory to either party, brought a measure of peace to traditionally unstable frontier areas.

To what extent Muḥammad Shāh was in firm control of events throughout his reign, and how far he followed his seemingly insouciant prime minister, Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī, awaits further research. The record does not convey the impression of a particularly strong or energetic personality. The murder, early in the reign, of his first prime minister, Mīrzā Abuʾl-Qāsim Qāʾim-Maqām, provoked unfavourable comment among foreign observers, as did the Shah's subsequent dependence upon his second prime minister, Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī, who rightly or wrongly has remained one of the most consistently denigrated figures of the Qājār period. So far as internal developments were concerned, probably the most dangerous aspect of the Shah's reliance on Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī was the latter's pronounced Ṣūfī leanings. Muḥammad Shāh had been drawn to Sufism at an early age, but under the steadily increasing influence of a murshid who was also mentor and minister, the Shah became the willing sustainer of Ṣūfīs of all sorts, and in consequence neglected to maintain the traditional rôle of the ruler as patron and benefactor of the Shīᶜī ᶜulamā. To have a Ṣūfī Shah was bad enough; to have his spiritual master raised to be the Ṣadr-i Aᶜẓam was worse; but even more serious was the fact that the Shah's devotion to Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī ensured that he would not seek the spiritual guidance of a *Marjaᶜ-i Taqlīd* (Source of Precedent), for he regarded the Ḥājjī as a sufficient guide. Thus, throughout his reign, Muḥammad Shāh's relations with the leading representatives of the ᶜulamā were strained as they never were in the time of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh. It is from this reign that there first appeared among the ᶜulamā that bitter hatred of the Qājārs and the conviction of the illegitimacy of their rule which would so adversely prejudice popular opinion against them during the Tobacco Concession crisis of 1891–2, throughout the entire Constitutional period, and down to the final demise of the dynasty.[40]

Muḥammad Shāh's less than cordial relations with the leading ᶜulamā of his time were due entirely to his Ṣūfī proclivities and his dependence upon Ḥājjī

[39] Algar, *op. cit.*, pp. 114–17. See also Cole and Momen, "Mafia, Mob and Shiism in Iraq".
[40] See Algar, *op. cit.*, pp. 120–121.

Mīrzā Āghāsī, not to any encouragement of infidel innovations such as had characterized his father, ʿAbbās Mīrzā. Indeed, some caution needs to be exercised in attributing to either Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh or Muḥammad Shāh personally any conscious thrust in the direction of "westernization", although there were at court individuals who were enthusiastic about foreign novelties. The most that can be said with regard to these two reigns is that, as contacts with the agents of foreign powers were becoming fairly frequent during the first fifty years of the 19th century, it was inevitable that some degree of European influence would permeate a small circle of Iranians, mainly members of the royal family, courtiers and senior officials. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's and ʿAbbās Mīrzā's intentions in cultivating or tolerating representatives of various European governments was primarily to ease the tremendous pressure exerted on Iran by the agents of the Tsar. *Mutatis mutandis*, Muḥammad Shāh and Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī, bitterly resentful of British blustering and sufficiently shrewd to take Russian assurances of friendship *cum grano salis*, proved no less persistent in their attempts to escape pulverization between these upper and nether millstones by trying to extend Iran's diplomatic contacts to other European governments, such as those of France, Austria, and even Spain.[41]

The one area in which neither Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh nor Muḥammad Shāh shied away from working with foreign missions was that of military reform. After the end of the first war with Russia in 1804–13, thoughtful Iranians understood the necessity for confronting the Russians on their terms, and incidentally contributing to improved internal policing, by raising new units, disciplined in the European manner and equipped with the latest European weaponry. ʿAbbās Mīrzā's enthusiasm for his Niẓām-i Jadīd has already been alluded to, but it would be erroneous to suppose that his was a solitary voice crying in the wilderness. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh had his own European-officered battalions, in addition to those of the Valī ʿahd, although he was too lethargic to provide the personal supervision which their training demanded. Even Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, whom European observers described as a "throwback" to the age of Āghā Muḥammad Khān, understood the value of European training and weapons, and maintained a European-officered corps of regular infantry at Kirmānshāh, the equivalent of ʿAbbās Mīrzā's Niẓām-i Jadīd.

Because of the distance from Kirmānshāh to Tehran, and also because of the prince's secretiveness regarding his military establishment, his efforts in this direction were much less known to European contemporaries than were the

[41] Volodarsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 124–128.

well-publicized activities of ʿAbbās Mīrzā. A policy of deliberate obfuscation may account for the admission by Fraser, usually so well-informed, that "Mahomed Allee Meerza kept up at Kermanshah the most effective military establishment in Persia; but of its extent or organization I am ignorant."[42] Another English traveller, J.S. Buckingham, who was in Kirmānshāh in 1816, heard that the prince maintained a force of one thousand regular infantry and five hundred regular cavalry there, in addition to being able to call upon the tribal levies of the province in an emergency. He also heard that the prince had in his service a Russian renegade, known as Yūsuf Khān, whom he had appointed as his *Tūpchī-Bāshī* (Commander of Artillery). The versatile Russian, in addition to establishing a park of artillery and strengthening the city's fortifications, had set up a foundry for casting brass cannon, and a factory for manufacturing gunpowder.[43] Buckingham's information was more or less confirmed by Sir Robert Ker Porter during a visit to Kirmānshāh two years later. He testified that there were troops there organized on the European model, and spoke of two French officers and an Armenian artificer in connection with artillery and an arsenal.[44] Another example of a prominent figure seeking to apply European methods to the training of his troops was the Vālī of Ardalān, Amān-Allāh Khān (c. 1800–24), as an English visitor to Sanandaj in 1820 recorded in his journal.[45]

This was, no doubt, the application of western technology upon a very small scale, but it had a cumulative effect. Thus, writing of the year 1832, the author of the *Fārsnāma-yi Nāṣirī* noted that an Englishman, the former instructor of a detachment of Qarāgūzlū tribesmen, and an Iranian who had formerly been in the service of ʿAbbās Mīrzā, had both been admitted to the service of the beglerbegī of Fārs, Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā Farmān-farmā, and been given unusually

[42] Fraser, *Khorasan* I, p. 225.

[43] Buckingham, I, pp. 177, 180, 193. Rich was presumably referring to Yūsuf Khān when he wrote: "Lately a man in Kermanshah, who practises founding, casting and coining, has greatly contributed to the destruction of the plane forests, fancying that nothing but charcoal made of tchinar [chenār] would answer his purpose"; *Narrative* I, p. 106.

[44] Porter, II, p. 181. See Jaubert, p. 280, and Keppel, I, p. 320. The two French officers mentioned by Porter may have been de Veaux (or de Vaux) and Court, whom Keppel encountered in Kirmānshāh in 1821. Keppel also found two Italian soldiers of fortune and a *soi-disant* Spaniard, "Senor Oms" there. He was told that at one time, Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, for whom these mercenaries expressed warm praise for his intrepid spirit on the battlefield, had employed seven or eight European officers in his service. Keppel, II, pp. 14–21. To de Veaux, apparently, was attributed the success of the prince's advance against Baghdad in 1821: Flandin and Coste, II, p. 520. Following the death of Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, several of these European officers in due course made their way to northern India, where they entered the service of Ranjit Singh, the Sikh ruler of the Panjab. There, the mysterious "Senor Oms" met with a premature death, but both Claude August Court (1793–1861) and Paolo di Avitabile (1791–1850) carved out brilliant careers for themselves in the Sikh service. See Grey, pp. 121–2, 148, 163.

[45] Rich, I, p. 216.

high salaries. A year or two later, there was even stranger news to report: the vazīr of Fārs, Mīrzā Ḥasan Niẓām al-ᶜUlamā, had persuaded Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā to recruit three battalions of regular troops and have them trained in the European style by a certain Englishman, John Walter. As with ᶜAbbās Mīrzā's regulars in Tabrīz, Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā's troops were to parade daily on the *maidān-i tūpkhāna* in Shīrāz, each battalion consisting of 800 men. One battalion consisted of men from Shīrāz, under the command of the beglerbegī's son, Nādir Mīrzā. Another was formed from Qashqāʾī, Bahārlū, Nafar and Arab tribesmen, under the command of Jahāngīr Khān, the son of the Qashqāʾī Īl-Khān. The third was recruited from the districts of Shīrāz, Sarvistān, Fasā, Dārāb and Istahbānāt, and was commanded by Mīrzā ᶜAbd-Allah Khān, a kinsman of the author of the *Fārsnāma-yi Nāṣirī*.[46]

Symptomatic of the same preoccupation with European military techniques was the desire expressed to a passing Englishman by Muḥammad Shāh's brother, Bahrām Mīrzā Muᶜizz al-Daula, the short-lived beglerbegī of Kirmānshāh, that British officers might be stationed in the city, to be able to train his troops in the style of the Niẓām-i Jadīd.[47] It was apparently in response to this expressed wish of a governor of a strategically important region, that the young Henry Rawlinson was sent to Kirmānshāh in April 1835 at the request of the Shah, to act "as a sort of military adviser and assistant" to his brother.[48] Thus, the earliest concern shown by Iranians for increased knowledge of the West related specifically to warfare and technology, and while it may be true that it is a relatively short step from wanting guns and bayonets to assimilating the more seductive aspects of an alien civilization, for Qājār Iran at least, that still lay in the future. Throughout the lifetimes of both Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh and Muḥammad Shāh, Iran was still, in almost every respect, a medieval Muslim society largely self-sufficient in most of its material needs as well as in its cultural identity.

[46] Ḥasan-i Fasāʾī, *op. cit.*, pp. 221–2. [47] Fraser, *Koordistan* II, pp. 190–1.

[48] Rawlinson, *A Memoir of Major-General Sir Henry Creswicke Rawlinson*, pp. 55–6. For Rawlinson's experiences in the employment of the beglerbegī of Kirmānshāh, see also H.C. Rawlinson, "Notes on a March from Zoháb", pp. 26–116.

CHAPTER 5

IRAN UNDER THE LATER QĀJĀRS, 1848–1922

THE QĀJĀR POLITICAL SYSTEM

Before discussing the vicissitudes of late Qājār politics, it would be useful to try to understand how 19th century Iranian politics worked. Essentially these workings were only a slight variation on the general pattern of Iranian politics since the 11th century, when large-scale invasions of nomadic Turkish tribes that accompanied the Saljuq incursions, and the spread of the quasi-feudal *iqṭāʿ* system strengthened the regional power of tribal and other military leaders and weakened the strength of central governments. Although there were, between the 11th and 19th centuries, governments of very varied powers, ranging from the strongest of the Saljuq, Mongol and Safavid rulers to periods of complete breakdown of central government, there were certain similarities that characterize the whole of this period. Among these was the status of the numerous nomadic tribes, which ranged from almost total independence to a degree of internal autonomy. Tribes managed not only their own internal affairs, subject generally to tribute and pro-forma confirmation of tribal leaders by the rulers, but also frequently ruled over villagers who inhabited territories in their regions. Beyond this internal autonomy, the tribes constituted the most effective fighting forces in Iran during most of this long period – their mastery of horsemanship and of the latest weapons giving them a decisive advantage over the city population, whom the Shahs generally showed little inclination to train. Every important Iranian dynasty from the Saljuqs to the Qājārs was either tribal in origin or relied on tribal backing in taking power. In the early 19th century, nomadic tribes were estimated to form one third to one half of the Iranian population.[1] At the end of the century estimates were generally one quarter, but since the Iranian population was supposed to have doubled in the interim, from about five million to about ten million persons, the absolute number of tribes people probably remained stationary. The impact of this large, semi-autonomous, and influential tribal grouping on Iranian life and politics has not yet been given the theoretical consideration it deserves.

[1] C. Issawi, *Economic History of Iran*, p. 20; G. Gilbar, "Demographic Developments".

If tribal leaders, who could call on well armed and generally devoted followers, made up a major element of the Iranian ruling group, there were also other key, often overlapping, elements. In Qājār times the strongest was the court element, headed by the Shah himself, including legions of royal relatives, among whom the Queen Mother and favourite wife or wives might be very influential. Qājārs were often named governors of provinces although they were not exempt from having to purchase these offices. The central and regional treasurers, or *mustaufī*s, tended to be hereditary, using a code and techniques that only they could understand. Otherwise, nearly all offices in the rudimentary central and regional bureaucracy were to some degree bought, and in Qājār times there developed an almost annual auction, with governorships going to the man who offered the most for them, and the governor in turn selling local tax-collecting and other positions.[2] This system, as in many societies, had the advantage of giving to the Shah or governor a fixed amount of ready cash in advance, but had the far greater disadvantage, from the viewpoint of production and prosperity, of encouraging officials to raise as much as they could in taxes since they could not be certain that they could hold their post against a higher bidder the following year. There were exceptions to the yearly bidding, such as the governor-generalship of Āẕarbāījān, which the Qājārs gave to the Crown Prince, with real rule often in the hands of a minister. The use of taxes to extort as much as posible from the peasant majority was not significantly abated in such areas, however.

One notable feature of the central bureaucracy was the possibility of rising from humble origins within the royal household to high positions. Prime examples are Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's reforming prime minister, Mīrzā Taqī Khān, the Amīr-i Kabīr, and the long-lived later prime minister, Mīrzā ʿAlī Aṣghar Khān Amīn al-Sulṭān. The father of the first was a steward in the royal household; the father of the latter a butler of Georgian origin who rose to become the Shah's most influential confidant.

If aristocratic blood, in the Western sense, had little meaning in Iran, where titles were usually purchased and were not automatically passed on from father to son, landholding was of major importance in conferring status as well as power. Both the tribal leadership and those in government service tried to get their hands on large amounts of land, and might purchase tax-farming rights for their own lands, which meant that the relatively small body of government officials might never enter their territories. Although no reliable statistics are

[2] R. Shaikhulislami, "The Sale of Offices in Qajar Iran 1856–1896".

available, it seems that most land throughout Qājār times was owned by men who did not work their lands themselves but received rents, mostly in kind, from sharecropping peasants. As the century advanced, more and more merchants purchased land and they, along with some traditional landlords, began to use their lands increasingly for export crops like cotton and opium.[3] Although estates tended to be broken down through the operation of Islamic inheritance laws, which called for the giving of defined shares to varied family members, and through confiscation by the central government, lands could be kept together for the whole family through the creation of a family *vaqf* or mortmain, and sometimes through evasion of Islamic laws. Rich and propertied officials who incurred the displeasure of the Shah might have their property confiscated. Even officials close to the court often had their properties confiscated after their death. Qājār Iran thus provides arguments to suggest extreme upward and downward mobility for a few at the centres of wealth and power, but most were far less mobile, enjoying either continuity of wealth and public office, or, in most cases, poverty and powerlessness. Wealthy merchant families sometimes moved into landholding and even governmental circles.

Government bureaucracy and functions were limited throughout the Qājār period, although they tended to increase in the latter part of that period. The chief function of the bureaucracy was to collect taxes and customs duties, and the chief use made of monies collected was to support the collectors and the provincial and central courts – especially the Shah and his entourage. Public works, such as the building and repair of roads and caravansarais (as had been carried out by some Safavid and other rulers) were not given priority, especially during the late Qājār period. Institutions considered to be the responsibility of government in the modern West, such as schools, hospitals, and most law courts, were mainly left to those with religious training, supported by income from religious gifts and taxes.

Strikingly little attention was given by the Qājār Shahs to the creation of a modern military force which might protect them from both external attack and internal revolt. Recognition of the need for a modern army for self-preservation had launched the modernization programmes of Muḥammad ʿAlī in Egypt and of Selīm III and Maḥmūd II in the Ottoman Empire in the early 19th century. Their new military forces required translation bureaux, sending students

[3] For a full discussion of the commercialization of Iranian agriculture, see V.F. Nowshirvani, "The Beginnings of Commercialized Agriculture in Iran"; G. Gilbar, "The Big Merchants (tujjar) and the Constitutional Movement of 1906"; and R.T. Olson, "Persian Gulf Trade and the Agricultural Economy of Southern Iran in the Nineteenth Century".

abroad, building modern schools at home, and beginning factories to meet the needs of the armed forces. In Iran, however, after the death of Crown Prince ᶜAbbās Mīrzā in 1833, there were only sporadic attempts to bring in Western military instructors from various countries to train sections of the armed forces, and only the Russian-officered Cossack Brigade, later in the century, became a serious and disciplined force, though a small one. Otherwise the Iranian army was noted for its almost total disorganization, and for the sale of office to incompetents who appropriated their men's salaries and in return allowed the men to make a living by whatever trade they could, and neglected their drill and training. Apart from the Cossack Brigade, the government mainly relied on tribal forces that were not part of the regular army and which were mobilized by the promise of freedom to loot and plunder.

Several explanations can be suggested for the Qājārs' lack of success in building an effective military force. Iran was not in contact with the West as early and intensively as were Egypt and the Ottoman Empire, and forces opposing centralization were also stronger within Iran. Tribal leaders, the *ᶜulamā* and vested interests at court effectively blocked reformist measures for different reasons. Moreover, Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh did not feel it necessary to take such measures very seriously and preferred to rely on limited military forces along with a vague British guarantee of Iran's territorial integrity (which he tried unsuccessfully to strengthen).

Lacking a strong army or national police, and lacking roads and railways with which to reach the provinces, the central government had therefore to use largely indirect methods of rule, such as dividing opposing forces, offering bribes in the form of pensions, and holding hostages in the capital for the good behaviour of powerful families and tribes.

In addition to these groups, opposition to the Throne was sometimes forthcoming from the Shīᶜī ᶜulamā, who are described in more detail elsewhere (see Chapter 19). Many Imāmī (Twelver) Shīᶜīs regard temporal rulers as, to some degree, illegitimate – with legitimate power belonging to the Hidden Imām. With Shiᶜism there gradually grew up the theory that the *mujtahid*s were the most qualified interpreters of the will of the Hidden Imām in many legal and social matters. Hence, if a mujtahid, and particularly the leading mujtahid, should speak out against the practice of a temporal ruler, it was the mujtahid who should be obeyed. In Safavid times this potential conflict remained muted, partly because the Safavids claimed to be descended from an Imām, and also because they maintained considerable control and influence over the religious establishment – but even in late Safavid times there were mujtahids who spoke

out against the rule of wine-drinking, impious Shahs, and claimed that the mujtahids themselves had greater right to rule.[4]

During the eighteenth century, the centre of Shīʿī leadership shifted outside Iran to the Shīʿī shrine cities of Ottoman Iraq, where it could be free of the Shahs' influence and intimidation. There was enough income at the shrines through endowments and donations to support a large community of religious leaders, scholars and students, independent of the Iranian government. Even within Iran, as direct recipients of the Islamic *khums* and *zakāt* tax and of considerable income from pious endowments (*vaqfs*) as well as other income for services rendered, the Shīʿī ʿulamā had considerable independent wealth. Naturally, this wealth was very unequally distributed, and there were poor, middling and rich mullas, some of whom carried on trades or owned much land to supplement their income from their other functions. As a corporate group, the ʿulamā were well funded, and this wealth forwarded their power and independence. In addition to their own sources of income, they were frequently given incomes and pensions by the government. Many of the ʿulamā had close ties with bazaar merchants and artisans. In addition, *lūṭī*s (urban toughs) as well as religious students often acted as their private armies.

Many of the functions that modern states would consider governmental were carried out in Qājār Iran, as in most traditional Muslim societies, by the ʿulamā. Such functions included most educational, judicial and legal work and such social and charitable services as existed. Aside from the technical school, or *Dār al-Funūn*, of Tehran, founded by Mīrzā Taqī Khān Amīr-i Kabīr in 1851 under government auspices, there were other forms of secular education conducted by scribes and tutors, in which the government played no part in determining the curriculum or structure. The curriculum in religious schools was strictly traditional and Islamic. It concentrated at the lower levels on reading, writing, and the memorization of the Qurʾān by rote, and, higher levels, on Arabic and the traditional Islamic sciences. Only near the end of the Qājār period were there a few new initiatives, largely private, to create modern schools, sometimes influenced by earlier, foreign-inspired Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian schools.

The administration of justice was divided between Islamic *sharīʿa* courts, run by the ʿulamā, and the courts of *ʿurf* or "customary law", presided over by the Shah, the governors, and their representatives. Some tribal groups had their

[4] J. Chardin, *Voyages*, pp. 2:207–8; see also, A.K.S. Lambton, *State and Government in Medieval Islam*, pp. 278–83.

own customary law. In general, the sharīʿa courts dealt with family and personal status law, with wills, contracts, and other legal documents, and with breaches of Islamic law, while magistrates' courts concentrated on criminal cases and rebels against the state. In the case of commercial litigation, the parties involved might choose between secular mediators or religious authorities. Throughout the Qājār period there was a tendency for the government to extend the power of its courts and legal prerogatives, which was generally resisted by the ʿulamā.

Entry into the ʿulamā corps, gained through study, was often an avenue of upward social mobility, and entailed more respect than did entry into the Qājār bureaucracy. Mosques and shrines as well as houses of mujtahids, foreign missions and foreign-owned telegraph offices were chief areas of *bast* or refuge from the government.[5] Although some of the ʿulamā, especially the government-appointed *imām jumʿa*s of the cities, tended to side with the government, and others might hoard, cheat, extort, or take bribes, in general they were thought to do this less than government officials. Thus, they were sometimes appealed to with success to represent popular grievances against the government. Several times in the Qājār period, and most notably in the protest against the British tobacco concession and in the Constitutional Revolution, an important sector of the ʿulamā became indentified with, and some even led, popular movements against the government and against the encroachments of foreign imperialist policies.

In addition to the indigenous and traditional powerholding classes discussed above – the bureaucracy, court, and royal family; the tribal leaders; the landholders; and the ʿulamā – the Qājār period witnessed the growing power of a new, non-indigenous group who profoundly affected Iranian history: the foreigners. Although foreign nationals did not overrun Iran to the same extent as they did Egypt, the Levant, or Turkey, Iran was nearly as much affected as they were by the policies of foreign governments and of a small number of foreign businessmen. Beginning with the strategic involvement of France, Great Britain and Russia with Iran during the Napoleonic Wars, Iran came to be affected particularly by the policies of Great Britain and Russia. In addition to their economic interest in Iranian trade, and later in concessions, Great Britain and Russia had strong political and strategic interests in Iran. The former was concerned to keep control of the Persian Gulf, to keep other powers out of it, and to safeguard southern and eastern Iran for the defence of India. Russia, after

[5] On occasion an entire neighbourhood controlled by a *mujtahid* could be recognized as an area of *bast*. See H. Algar, *Religion and State in Iran*, p. 113.

taking some Transcaucasian territory from Iran in two wars in the early nineteenth century, wished to make northern Iran an area of overwhelming Russian influence, and tried, as did Britain, to be the paramount influence over the Iranian government. There were some in Russia who hoped to gain more territory and an outlet to a warm water port on the Persian Gulf, but neither Power was willing to allow the other extensive territorial gains or the achievement of protectorate status over Iran, let alone the conquest of the whole country. It was this strong mutual desire to stop total control by the other party more than any other factor that was responsible for maintaining Iran's independence. This independence was often purely formal since Iran would not venture to take a step that seriously offended either of the two parties (as the Reuter concession of 1872 offended Russia) unless it believed it had strong support from the other party (and the British did not support Iran in the Reuter affair); even such support was insufficient in many cases, if the other were sufficiently threatening and displeased. The diplomatic files of the Qājār period are filled with discussions by Iran's chief ministers and the Shah with British and Russian representatives, trying to secure their approval of policies that in a truly independent state would be a matter of internal decision. While it is easy for one who reads chiefly British sources to get the impression that British intentions in Iran were reformist and benevolent, a fuller acquaintance with Persian and Russian sources does not bear out this interpretation. On the whole the British desired those reforms that would facilitate trade and the security of foreigners and those connected with them in Iran. When really reforming nationalists appeared, as in the case of the Democratic Party during the Constitutional Revolution, who might have limited the privileges of foreigners in Iran, the British opposed them.

European governments tended to favour, and even aggressively to promote, the trading and commercial interest of their own nationals. Again the difference between Great Britain and Russia in this respect is not as great as it is often presented. It is true that the Russian government offered direct subsidies and rebates to encourage exports to Iran, as to other countries, and also promoted banking and railway schemes, among others, in part as a means of spreading Russian political influence. The British, however, also considered railway schemes mainly from a strategic viewpoint, ultimately deciding to oppose them, as did the Russians, on the same grounds. The British government also played a considerable rôle in encouraging or discouraging investment in particular schemes; discouraging the Reuter concession, but then using Reuter's claim to fight Russia's quest for a railway concession, and encouraging Reuter's final

compensation in 1889 with the concession for the Imperial Bank of Persia and its attached mineral rights. During his mission to Iran in 1888–90, in particular, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff pushed for a variety of British economic schemes and concessions, such as the opening of the Kārūn river to navigation (the Lynch Brothers who navigated it got a government subsidy), and the disastrous Tobacco Concession of 1890. The D'Arcy Oil Concession of 1901 was similarly negotiated with help from the British legation.[6]

Given the favoured position of Western traders, who, unlike the Persians, did not have to pay internal customs, the impossibility of protecting infant industries or handicrafts due to the enforced low customs duties, and the lack of any serious government policy to help businessmen, Iran became economically heavily dependent on the West. When to this are added Iran's political and military weakness and dependence on Western advice and approval, and the rôle of the Russians and British in protecting the unpopular Qājār dynasty against revolt or rebellion, it seems legitimate to call Iran a semicolony in which the independence of both people and government was strictly limited. Thus to discuss Iranian politics as distinct from Iran's foreign relations is to imply an artificial separation between them. It must be borne in mind that the internal politics discussed below were to a considerable degree controlled not only from behind the scenes, as they are in many countries, but even from beyond Iran's borders.

THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE LATER QĀJĀR PERIOD

The middle decades of the 19th century brought promises of change for many Iranians. First came the Bābī messianic movement and revolts which originated in 1844 with Sayyid ʿAlī Muḥammad, known as the Bāb, a young merchant from Shīrāz who, through reinterpretation of Traditions concerning the Hidden Imām, proclaimed the coming of a "new age" and the Imām's return. The Bāb's radical message attracted enthusiasts from all the urban social classes. Defying the very bases of the religious and political order of their time, the Bābīs were bound to come into open confrontation with those ʿulamā who were in close alliance with the state. The resistance of the Bābīs brought them considerable success, but the movement was eventually suppressed and its members persecuted. The Bāb was executed in 1850 and a turning point was reached in 1852 when a few of his followers tried to assassinate Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh. There

[6] R.W. Ferrier, *The History of the British Petroleum Company* I, pp. 27–47.

followed the brutal torture and execution of many Bābīs including the remarkable woman leader and poet Qurrat al-ʿAin.[7] After this, many Bābīs left Iran and took refuge in Baghdad. The Bāb had assigned the leadership of the community to Ṣubḥ-i Azal, but in the 1860s the latter's half-brother, Bahā-Allāh, proclaimed himself to be "He whom God shall make manifest" as promised by the Bāb, and claimed to be a new prophet with a new message. This message, which was humanist and pacifist, discouraged the continuation of militancy. His followers, known as Bahāʾīs, advocated moderate social and political reform and later found considerable success within and outside Iran.[8] A militant minority of Bābīs who opposed changes proposed by Bahāʾ-Allāh gave allegiance to Ṣubḥ-i Azal. Several Azalī Bābīs, as the latter group was known, became active in opposition movements such as the Constitutional Revolution, discussed below.

The other promising yet short-lived development, which coincided in time with the Bābī movements, was the reform programme introduced by Mīrzā Taqī Khān *Amīr-i Kabīr* (1848–52). His execution in the Bāgh-i Fīn near Kāshān in 1852 on the Shah's orders, ended the promise of social and political change.[9] The vested interests of these who influenced the young Shah against his ex-prime-minister wanted to preclude him from ever getting power again, and they effectively did so. Even in those intervals when the Shah decided he wanted reform, he was never able to find a minister equally capable. With the dismissal and death of Amīr-i Kabīr nearly all his reforms fell into abeyance; courtiers and ʿulamā regained their former pensions and privileges, and of his initiatives only the Tehran technical and military school, the Dār al-Funūn, remained. With the help of European teachers it continued to train students from the upper classes in fields of medicine, engineering, military sciences, music and foreign languages and later (in the 1930s) served as one of the foundations for modern higher education in Iran.

The Amīr-i Kabīr's successor as chief minister, Mīrzā Āghā Khān Nūrī, was reactionary and corrupt, and helped reverse the progress of reform. The only notable events of his rule were a quarrel with the British legation over a trivial

[7] An eyewitness account of these events has been written by an Austrian physician. See, E.G. Browne, *Materials for the Study of Bābī Religion*, pp. 266–71. Tehran's first official newspaper *Vaqāyiʿ-i Ittifāqiyya* also reported the Bābī persecutions. These are quoted in M.A. Malik-Khusravi, *Tārīkh-i Shuhadā-yi ʿAmr* III, pp. 129–340. For a history of Bābī-Bahāʾī movement, see E.G. Browne, ed., *The Travellers Narrative*; M. Momen, *The Babi and Bahai Religions, 1844–1944*.

[8] For an outline of reforms proposed by Bahāʾīs, see ʿAbd al-Bahā, *Secret of Divine Civilization*; the work was originally written in 1875.

[9] For various accounts of Amīr-i Kabīr's murder, see J.H. Lorentz, *Modernization and Political Change in Nineteenth Century Iran: The Role of Amīr Kabīr*.

and apparently trumped-up charge, culminating in a temporary break of relations, followed by the Persian siege of Herat and the Anglo-Persian War of 1856–7. The Treaty of Paris of 1857, which terminated the war, made Iran give up all claims to Herat and Afghan territory, but there remained Iranians who hoped to move again into western Afghan territories, which had historically constituted part of Iran.

After Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh dismissed Mīrzā Āghā Khān Nūrī in 1858, strongly criticizing his lax conduct of office, the Shah decided, in view of his problems with his first two chief ministers, to try to rule without a chief minister. Instead, he divided the government among six ministers; Justice, Finance, War, Foreign Affairs, Pensions and *Auqāf* (religious endowments), and the Interior. Each minister was to report personally to the Shah, who alone had the power to issue or approve orders. At the same time, the Shah reinstated an old practice of holding a personal weekly court to hear petitions from the people.

This system proved unsuccessful. The quarrels and attempts at mutual sabotage among the ministers continued, and those outside the privileged six wanted entry into the circle of power. In 1859, the Shah established a wider consultative body, including princes, notables, clerks, ʿulamā, and officials. He also proposed similar consultative bodies for the provinces, but not many were created, and neither the central nor the provincial bodies seem to have functioned for long. Later, the Shah set up a smaller central advisory board, but that too was short-lived. For a time the Shah tried to divide all authority among three ministers, but this too was abortive. There are reports of the Shah's disgust at the failure of government to work efficiently and smoothly, and particularly of his dismay at the terrible condition of the armed forces and the army accounts. Although the Shah had access to whatever accounts existed, he lacked the technical knowledge to understand the accounts presented to him and what might be done to improve the collection and allocation of revenue.

One new development that helped the Shahs maintain and extend the power of the central government in the provinces was the construction of the first telegraph lines in Iran, which began in 1858–9. Since the Indian Mutiny of 1857, the British felt the need for telegraphic communication with India, and one of the means they sought to accomplish this was a concession for a line which, after transversing Europe and the Ottoman Empire, would go through Iran to the Persian Gulf and thence by cable to India. The first telegraph concession was granted in 1862 and the single line built soon after; further foreign and local construction resulted in a fairly complete telegraph network linking the major cities to the capital. The Shah could now know immediately what was occurring

in the provinces, and issue orders regarding rebellion or sedition. On the other hand, the opposition found the telegraph a useful tool in co-ordinating their movements in 1891–2 and again in 1905–11.

It may have been frustration at the failure of his central administration to accomplish anything useful between 1851 and 1870 that led Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh to reconsider the possibility of appointing a reforming government under a strong minister. The right man – in many ways the successor to Amīr-i Kabīr – was Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, son of a high-ranking bureaucrat and grandson of a barber who had entered the service of a Qājār prince.[10] After a successful career in the Iranian foreign service, beginning in India and later serving in Tiflis, Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān was made ambassador to Istanbul during the great Ottoman reform period after 1856. Already predisposed to reform and modernization by his experience in India and Russia, Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān became an even more eager partisan of reform as a result of what he saw in the Ottoman Empire. He seems also to have been influenced by at least two identifiable reformist thinkers – Fatḥ ʿAlī Ākhūndzāda, whom he got to know well in Tiflis, and the Iranian Armenian, Malkum Khān, whom he met in Istanbul.

Malkum Khān, for all the dubious elements in his life history, was one of the main advocates of reform in 19th-century Iran.[11] Born of an Armenian father who had, at least nominally, converted to Islam, he received his higher education in Paris. Returning to Iran soon after the founding of the Dār al-Funūn, he entered service there as a translator and teacher. He was responsible for setting up the first telegraph line in Iran, from the Dār al-Funūn to the palace. He soon set about founding the first secret society of a Masonic type, though without any official connection with world Free Masonry. This was known as the Farāmūshkhāna or "House of Forgetfulness", a term referring to the secret nature of this society.[12] The members were mostly of high rank and the Shah was kept informed, so it seems unlikely that anything really seditious was said or done. Malkum Khān, however, had a reputation as a man of advanced ideas, and had even written privately circulated treatises recommending governmental reforms, so that it was probably not hard for interested parties to arouse the Shah's suspicions. In 1861 the Shah issued a decree closing the Farāmūshkhāna,

[10] Khān Malik Sāsānī, I, p. 59. For details of Ḥusain Khān's reforms, see Bakhash, *Iran: Monarchy Bureaucracy and Reform* and G. Nashat, *The Origins of Modern Reform in Iran, 1870–1880*. The most detailed Western biography of Ḥusain Khan is unfortunately unpublished: A. Karny, *Mirza Husein Khan Moshir od-Dawle and His Attempts at Reform in Iran 1871–1873* (UCLA Ph.D. dissertation, Los Angeles, 1973).

[11] For a biography of Malkum Khān, see Algar, *Mīrzā Malkum Khān*. For a more sympathetic treatment, see Muḥīṭ Ṭabāṭabāʾī, *Majmūʿ-yi Āṡār-i Mīrzā Malkum Khān*.

[12] Algar, "The Introduction to the History of Freemasonry in Iran".

and he exiled Malkum, who went to the Ottoman Empire. In Istanbul Malkum was in close contact with Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, and some of the latter's ideas on restructuring government resemble those set forth by Malkum in his treatises.

Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān was eager to have the Shah travel abroad in order to see the advantages of progress, and the Shah himself was not averse to the idea of such travel, provided he could be sure that those he left behind would remain loyal. Possibly to be politic in his choice of destination for his first foreign trip, rather than from religious devotion, Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh decided to visit, in 1870, the Shīʿī holy cities of Iraq. This happened to be a fortunate choice for the reformist goals of Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, since the governor of Baghdad province was the famous and effective reformer, Mihdat Pāshā, who had greatly improved the province during his tenure. At the Shah's request, Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān accompanied him from near the Ottoman border throughout his trip in Ottoman Iraq, and this gave Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān ample opportunity to point out the benefits of reform. The Shah was so impressed with his ambassador that he insisted on his company directly back to Tehran, and did not even give Mīrzā Ḥusain a chance to return to Istanbul to settle his affairs.[13]

Even before their return to Tehran in February 1871, the Shah made Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān Minister of Justice and also Minister of Pensions and Auqāf. He succeeded in putting some rational organization into these ministries, thus alienating some of the ʿulamā, on whose privileges he encroached. Later in that year he was made Minister of War, and succeeded in making some dramatic improvements in methods of drill and accounting, although he could not bring about the thorough reform the army needed. Finally, in November 1871, the Shah, having tried unsuccessfully to rule without a chief minister since 1858, appointed Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān to this position (*Ṣadr-i Aʿẓam*) and announced his support for a programme of reform to overcome the prevalent disorder. Under Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān's inspiration the Shah issued orders regularizing the cabinet, whose members were to be named by the chief minister with the Shah's approval. The cabinet was to meet regularly each week, and all the ministers were responsible to the chief minister, who had to approve the membership of each ministry. Each ministry was to have a regular location – a big change in a country where a ministry might be coterminous with the location of the minister at any given time. The chief minister in fact decided many affairs on his own, getting only formal approval from the Shah. While he was chief minister, Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān remained Minister of War and Commander in Chief, and con-

[13] Karny, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

tinued to try to introduce better order into the armed forces. He made serious efforts to create a rational administration and end corruption in government offices, but he does not seem to have had the political sense to try to build up a party of supporters within Iran, so that, possibly because of his autocratic ways, he alienated even reform-minded court figures like the future Amīn al-Daula. Malkum Khān was invited briefly back to Iran in 1872, possibly to help in the reform programme, but his brief presence before going abroad again had little real effect. Having spent most of his life abroad and as a relatively free agent in the Foreign Service, Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān may have lacked the skills of political manoeuvring that were essential to operating successfully in Iranian conditions. Even with such skills it would have been extremely difficult to cut into the corruption, incompetence, overstaffing, and vested interests that characterized the traditional ways of doing things, without the decisive backing of a firmer ruler than Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh.

The genuine good will toward the common people possessed by Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān was shown during the terrible famine of 1870–1, when it is estimated that as much as one tenth of Iran's population might have died. In addition to taking whatever steps he could to halt the practice of hoarding and speculation by the rich, including members of the court and some ᶜulamā, he threw open his own grain stores and tried to persuade the government to subsidize his lower-priced bread. This famine was primarily the result of a series of dry years and bad harvests and conversion of grain land to opium or cotton production for export, as well as of the export of foods for higher prices abroad. Iran was left more vulnerable than before to famine in bad years.[14]

In many ways Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān's prime ministry, only some of the achievements of which are noted above, repeated the experience of the Amīr-i Kabīr. In both cases a reformist chief minister, influenced by what he knew of Russia and the Ottoman Empire, tried to institute reforms of a strictly "self-strengthening" or "reform from above" variety, which would rationalize the centre, encourage economic progress, and strengthen the Shah's government and armed forces. In the course of doing so he antagonized courtiers and ᶜulamā without building up a large body of partisans, and he failed to get reliable backing from the Shah. The opposition ultimately succeeded in bringing about his dismissal.

There was, however, one major difference between the two. Whereas the Amīr-i Kabīr had understood the importance for Iran's independent develop-

[14] Karny, *op. cit.*, pp. 283–85.

ment of cutting down dependency on, and ties to, both Great Britain and Russia, and acted accordingly, Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, even before he became chief minister, believed that it was important to enlist Great Britain as heavily as possible in Iran's protection and development. Without necessarily endorsing his position, it is important to understand how he came to hold it. In the 1860s Russia had swept across Central Asia until it had bordered Iran to the northeast as well as to the northwest. It was not clear if Russia had further territorial designs on Iran. Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, like many other Iranian leaders, tried fruitlessly to get a clear guarantee of Iran's territorial integrity and independence from Britain. Also, in viewing Iran's undeveloped economy, Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān was attracted by the idea of trying to raise British capital for railway construction and other economic projects, since he regarded Russian capital as dangerous and other countries were less interested in such investments. Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān thus encouraged the grandiose concession negotiated between the Iranian minister in London and Baron Julius de Reuter, a naturalized British subject of news agency fame. Both during negotiations and in later attempts to get work started, Reuter gave bribes to high officials, including Malkum Khān, but there is no evidence that Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān took a bribe. He was, nevertheless, a strong partisan of the concession and helped persuade the Shah to sign it in 1872.

The sweeping Reuter Concession, which even an imperialist like Curzon later characterized as the most complete grant ever made of control over its resources by any country to a foreigner,[15] is indeed without historical parallel. Although the key point both for Reuter and the Iranians was the grant of the right to build a railway from the Caspian ports southward, the Concession also included total rights for all factories, minerals (except those then being exploited), irrigation works, agricultural improvements, new forms of transport, and virtually any form of modernized enterprise that might be undertaken in Iran. While it is true that no resource was ceded that was currently being exploited by Iranians, the foreclosure of future Iranian exploitation, as well as the concentration of such potential economic control over the country in the hands of one foreigner, constituted a serious threat to Iran's economic and political independence. Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān's belief that Iran's independence and economic development would best be forwarded by the unification of all schemes under the aegis of a British subject was sincere, but naïve in terms of the realities of international political and economic life.

[15] Curzon, *Persia* I, p. 480.

In 1872 Reuter sent a representative to Iran to finish the negotiations, and began to press for the help and permits needed to start railway construction. According to the Concession, Reuter had to put up £40,000 in caution money, and this would be forfeited if railway construction were not started by a given date. Throughout 1872 the Iranians procrastinated – partly because of high level opposition to the Concession, partly because Malkum Khān and others wanted further bribes, and partly because railway rights had previously been granted to another party and did not expire until the end of 1872. Even in 1873, however, Iranian obstacles to Reuter's beginning construction were not removed, but rather increased as Iranian opposition to the project grew, and was joined by that of the Russians.

Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh had apparently been toying for several years with the idea of a trip to Europe. No previous Qājār monarch had travelled outside Iranian territory, and the success of his trip to Ottoman Iraq may have encouraged the Shah to believe that he could safely and beneficially travel further afield. Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān strongly encouraged the idea of such a trip, as he felt that if the Shah saw Europe's progress at first hand he would become a firmer promoter of progressive measures at home. Leaving the affairs of Iran in the hands of picked royal relatives and courtiers, the Shah embarked on his trip abroad in 1873 – accompanied by various ministers, courtiers and women of the harem, including his favourite wife, Anīs al-Daula. The Shah's desire to travel with women created considerable problems, since the royal wives were, when in Iran, guarded not only by the all-enveloping costume worn by upper-class urban women, but by guards who forced persons on the street to move back or look away when they passed. No such treatment was possible abroad, and embarrassment was created when Russian officials tried to greet or otherwise deal with these women, while their heavily-covered figures occasioned stares and unwelcome approaches. On ministerial advice, the Shah decided to send the women home from Russia, and although Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān maintained that he had given no advice about this, Anīs al-Daula blamed him and became one of his most bitter and influential opponents. On her return, her palace became the centre of high level opposition to Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān – opposition that included both corrupt or reactionary elements whose vested interests were hurt by Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān's reforms and patriots whose opposition had been aroused by the Reuter Concession, as well as some with mixed motives. Many ʿulamā feared the railway and the influx of foreigners that threatened to follow from the Reuter Concession. A false text of the Concession was circulated which said that Reuter's railway would pass through the shrine of Shāhzāda ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm near

Tehran, which would be demolished – thus further arousing religious sentiment.

The Shah's 1873 European journey may be considered a failure, especially for the hopes of Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, who had failed to anticipate the strongly hostile attitude of the Russian authorities towards the Reuter Concession. His hopes that this opposition would be overcome by official British support were also dashed. British Foreign Office officials were inclined to despise Reuter as a foreigner and a Jew, and doubted the wisdom of a concession so calculated to arouse Russian hostility.[16] Without British government support and in the face of Russia's hostility, private British financial backing, which was needed for significant economic projects to be carried out, also fell away.

Worse was in store, however. When the royal party landed at Anzalī on the Caspian, in September 1873, a coalition of notables and ʿulamā demanded the dismissal of Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān. The threat of hostile action was so strong that the Shah had to give in, despite his own continued trust in his chief minister, whom he now appointed governor of Gīlān province. The Shah continued to write to him secretly that he would try to return him to Tehran as soon as possible, and he succeeded in bringing Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān back as Minister of War in 1874. He was never again strong enough to attempt wholesale reform, however.

Meanwhile, Iranian procrastination over Reuter's railway continued, and the strength of opposition to the scheme became clear. Although Reuter tried to start laying track in time to avoid forfeiting his caution money, his efforts were blocked and the Shah was able to cancel the Concession on the ostensible grounds that Reuter had failed to meet its terms. The Iranian government kept the caution money, and Reuter appealed for redress to the British Foreign Office. Although the Foreign Office had not hitherto shown any interest in helping Reuter, it soon came to see his claim as an effective weapon against Russian railway concession schemes which, London maintained, could not be granted as long as Reuter had a just claim.[17]

The story of the movement against the Reuter concession presents in embryo some of the features of later Iranian oppositional movements: a heterogeneous coalition of notables, ʿulamā, and common people, some primarily opposing Western or infidel innovations, some patriotic or progressive, and some simply self-interested or influenced by Russia, united against a move that they saw as the sale of Iran's resources, and possibly control over the country, to foreign

[16] Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia,* p. 132. [17] *Ibid*, pp. 134–47.

infidels. What is different about this first movement is not only its smaller size and scope, but also the fact that some prominent reformers like Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān and Malkum Khān were on the side of the foreigner. The opposition was, however, correct in seeing that the dangers to Iranian independence implied by such a large-scale British involvement outweighed any possible benefits.

In the years after 1873, the Shah returned to ruling without a chief minister, experimenting unsuccessfully with various conciliar and cabinet arrangements. For much of this period power was divided between Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, who added the Foreign Ministry to his post as War Minister, the reactionary Mustaufī al-Mamālik, who was in charge of internal affairs, and the shrewd Āqā Ibrāhīm Amīn al-Sulṭān, who became the Shah's closest confidant. They effectively stopped each other from achieving anything important and Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān's further reforms, such as the provincial council scheme of 1875, were mostly short-lived. Āqā Ibrāhīm, the son of a Christian convert, rose from menial service in the royal household to responsibility for the royal mint, customs, royal treasury, Ministry of Court and several other important offices. Though he had little education and no administrative experience, his shrewdness, his simplistic frugal approach to finance, and his expression of extreme loyalty to the royal household appealed to the Shah. Opposition to Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān at Tehran continued, and in 1880 the Shah transferred him to the governorship of Khurāsān and the Mashhad shrine. There he died in November 1881 – under mysterious circumstances, according to some.[18] The fall of Ḥusain Khān once again demonstrated the Shah's reluctance to pay the political price needed to form an efficient bureaucracy as a first step towards achieving meaningful political and administrative reform.

The 1880s saw the rise to power of the most tenacious and long-lived chief minister of Qājār Iran. Mīrzā ʿAlī Aṣghar Khān Amīn al-Sulṭān was the son of Āqā Ibrāhīm and, when only in his mid-twenties, he took over his father's titles and positions on the latter's death in 1883–4. The younger Amīn al-Sulṭān soon rose to become the Shah's chief minister, with considerable authority. From the beginning Amīn al-Sulṭān was extremely arrogant towards other officials and at times even treated the Shah contemptuously. Yet he was also a clever opportunist with all the policital skills in party building that Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān had lacked, plus the supreme skill of knowing what had to be done to keep the Shah happy. He also possessed to perfection the art of telling his listeners what they wished to hear – to Britain he was pro-British, often hamstrung by irresistible Russian pressures; to the Russians the reverse; to liberals a reformer frustrated

[18] Khān Malik Sāsānī, I, p. 92. See also, "Iʿtimād al-Salṭana, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān", *Khalseh* (Tehran, 1978), p. 111.

by insurmountable opposition; and to conservatives he was the arch conservative. Although often blamed for the generally reactionary and foreign-oriented policies that characterized the years of his power, it seems likely that he mainly carried out the wishes of his royal master, since his principal aim was not to be reformist or reactionary, but simply to stay in power.

Until 1892, Amīn al-Sulṭān followed a generally pro-British policy. During his time in office the issue of foreign concessions again came to the fore. Some concessions were granted in the early 1880s, but the real concession fever began in 1888 when the forceful Sir Henry Drummond Wolff was sent by London as Minister to Iran to strengthen the British position. He energetically advocated economic concessions. Wolff believed that Iran could be made strong enough to resist Russian incursions only through economic concessions which would both develop the country and increase Western European commitment to Iran's future. He had many friends in the financial world, and an unbounded faith in the ability of foreign capitalists to solve the problem of backward countries. He was naïve in not expecting the Russians to react strongly against his programme, and tried to reach an agreement with Russia over Iran at the same time as he pursued policies that the Russians could only oppose. At Wolff's prompting the Shah opened the Kārūn River, in southern Iran, to international navigation in 1888 – a situation that could only be taken advantage of by the British. The Russians objected that they had an agreement with Iran whereby Iran could not give transport concessions without Russian consent, but the Iranian government replied that opening their own river to navigation was not a concession. Wolff also promoted a settlement of Reuter's outstanding claims through a new concession to Reuter for a bank with the exclusive right to issue banknotes, and attached extensive rights in mineral exploitation. This bank, with its headquarters in Tehran and branches in several cities, was soon opened under the somewhat bizarre name for a foreign firm, the Imperial Bank of Persia. The exclusive note-issuing privileges of the bank were a considerable blow to many Persian merchants and moneychangers, who had issued their own form of notes and tried to continue to do so until they were stopped. The competition of the bank was disliked by the same groups, who more than once organized to make large withdrawals of silver to undermine the bank's solvency. The Russians countered these concessions with their own bank concession. The Russian Bank was widely believed to be government supported and did not have to make money and hence could be used even more effectively than the British Bank to make uneconomic loans to prominent persons in order to buy their loyalty. The Russians also received road concessions.

On his trip through Russia in 1878 the Shah had been impressed by the

Russian Cossack forces, and requested Russian officers to command and drill a new Persian Cossack Brigade, which was founded in 1879. This soon became the one well-trained and reliable force in the Persian army (as large as 2,000 men by the 1890s), useful mostly for protecting the Shah and his government. It was also another instrument of Russian influence in Iran. Added to the spate of concessions from 1888 to 1890, it meant that Iran was being increasingly manipulated by Russian and British economic and political pressures.

PROTEST AND REVOLUTION: 1890–1914

The economic and political dislocations brought by the Western impact included the undermining of many Iranian handicrafts, the turning of workers in the one favoured craft of carpets into wage labourers who often worked for a pittance, the fall of prices of Iranian exports as compared to European imports, and the disastrous fall in the international price of silver, the basis of Iran's currency. These plus the difficulty of being a trader independent of Europeans and the impossibility of setting up protected factories led to growing economic discontent and resentment against European economic rivals. Increasing Western political and financial control of Iran was also resented, and the numerous Iranian traders and workers who travelled to India, Russian Transcaucasia, and Turkey were able to witness reforms and hear liberal or radical ideas that suggested ways that governments could change in form and could undertake modernizing and self-strengthening policies that might help Iran and free the country of foreign control.

In the 1880s and after there were a number of men with official positions who advocated reform. Among the ministers the most important was Amīn al-Daula, who had held a variety of posts, chiefly that of Minister of Posts, and was generally considered a sincere and honest reformer and westernizer who disliked the corruption and foreign dominance he saw around him. Less forceful or powerful than men like Amīr-i Kabīr or Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān (with whom he did not enjoy good relations), he could achieve only little influence in the face of power maintained by Amīn al-Sulṭān. Mīrzā Malkum Khān (1883–1908), discussed above, after his departure from Iran became for years the Minister of Iran to Great Britain, and concentrated his reform activities on promoting a modified Persian script and to writings directed to a small number of élite Iranians.

In 1889 Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh took his third trip to Europe, a trip that was heavily promoted by Wolff, who hoped to further British financial interest in Iran, and succeeded to a great extent. Among the concessions signed by the Shah

was a concession for a lottery in Iran promoted in part by Malkum Khān. After his return to Iran, the Shah was faced with strong opposition to the lottery concession, coming largely from the religious elements who noted that gambling was forbidden by the Koran. The Shah cancelled the concession and so informed Malkum Khān, who hastened to sell the concesson for a handsome price before it became known in England that it had been cancelled. This behaviour resulted in Malkum's dismissal from his posts and the stripping of all his titles. This somewhat tarnished but influential reformer now decided either to undermine, or alternatively to blackmail, the Iranian government by producing an oppositional and reformist newspaper, *Qānūn* (law), which was printed in London and smuggled into Iran. Preaching the virtues of a fixed legal system and the evils of arbitrary and corrupt governments, *Qānūn* concentrated its personal attacks on Amīn al-Sulṭān, and was quite widely read among Iran's élite during the seven years of its existence, until the death of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh. The only other free newspaper at this time, the much older *Akhtar* put out by Iranians in Istanbul, was much milder in its reformism, and hence, unlike *Qānūn*, was less frequently forbidden entry into Iran. Within Iran there were only official journals, the one experience of a freer paper launched with the encouragement of Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān in 1876, the bilingual *La Patrie*, lasted for only one issue, as its French editor called for free and fearless criticism.

Before 1890 most educated westernizing reformers had been rather hostile to the ᶜulamā – as witness Amīr-i Kabīr, Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, Amīn al-Daula, and the Bābī and Bahāʾī reformers. On the other hand, some ᶜulamā who felt Western innovation was dangerous to Islam stood out as opponents of the alarming trend towards the selling of Iran's resources to foreigners, and the ᶜulamā's virtual inviolability and their ties to the guilds could make even secular reformers recognize them as useful allies in a struggle against foreign control. From 1890 to 1912 and even beyond there were occasions during which some reconciliation existed between the secularist and ᶜulamā elements of the opposition. One of the forgers of this alliance, unusual in world history, between religious and radical elements was the internationally travelled Muslim reformer and pan-Islamist, Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, 1839–97.[19] He claimed Afghan birth and upbringing, probably in order to have more influence in the Sunnī world than he could have had as an Iranian who had a Shīᶜī education in Iran and in the Shīᶜī shrine cities of Iraq. Educated in the rationalist philosophical tradition of

[19] For a detailed biography of al-Afghānī, see Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din "al-Afghani"*, and *idem*, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism*. See also E. Kedourie, *Afghani and ʿAbduh*; A. Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*; and H. Pakdaman (Nateq), *Djamal-ed-Din Asadabadi*.

Avicenna and later Iranian philosophers, who were far more widely taught in Iran than in the Sunnī Middle East, Afghānī seems also to have been influenced by the philosophically oriented Shaikhī school of Shiʿism. In about 1857–8, he travelled to British India, where he seems to have developed a lifelong hatred of British imperialism. After an unsuccessful attempt in Afghanistan to arouse its rulers against the British in the late 1860s, he travelled to Istanbul, whence he was expelled in 1870 for a "heretical" talk that restated the views of some Muslim philosophers. In Egypt from 1871 to 1879 he helped arouse and educate a group of young men who were prominent in Egypt's national awakening, and after his expulsion by the foreign-influenced khedive Taufiq, he continued his modernist and anti-imperialist writing first in India and then in Paris, where he edited the anti-British and pan-Islamic Arabic newspaper, *al-ʿUrwa al-Wuthqā*. After an unsuccessful attempt in London to influence British policy in Egypt and the Sudan, he returned to the south Persian port city of Būshahr, whence he had left before for India, and where he had his books sent from Egypt. He apparently intended only to pick up his books and go to Russia, where his anti-British views had attracted the nationalist publicist Katkov. The Iranian Minister of Press, Iʿtimād al-Salṭana, who had read *al-ʿUrwa al-Wuthqā*, talked the Shah into inviting Afghānī to Tehran. There he soon offended the Shah, apparently by his violent anti-British proposals, but he began to gather around him a group of Iranian disciples. To them he apparently spoke of the need of uniting religious and nonreligious oppositions to foreign encroachments. Forced by the Shah to leave Iran in 1887, he spent two years in Russia and then rejoined the Shah during his third trip to Europe. He then went to Russia, believing he had a mission from Amīn al-Sulṭān to smooth over Russian hostility regarding concessions to the British, but in Iran Amīn al-Sulṭān denied giving him such a mission and refused to see him. In the summer of 1890 Afghānī heard that the Shah was planning to exile him and forestalled this by taking bast (sanctuary) in the shrine Shāhzāda ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm just south of Tehran. Here he continued to gather disciples to whom he explained such means of organized opposition as the secretly posted and distributed leaflet and the political secret society. His contacts in Iran included his Tehran host, Amīn al-Żarb, the largest and wealthiest Persian merchant and master of the mint; Amīn al-Daula; some members of the ʿulamā, notably the ascetic and reformist Shaikh Hādī Najmābādī; and various reformers and ordinary people, such as his devoted servant Mīrzā Riżā Kirmānī. In January 1891, convinced that a leaflet strongly attacking the government for its concessions to foreigners emanated from Afghānī, the Shah sent soldiers who forcibly dragged him from his sanctuary

and sent him on a forced march to the Iraqi border in mid-winter. From Ottoman Iraq, and then from London, where he soon proceeded and joined Malkum Khān, Afghānī continued to write and speak against the Shah and his government, and he left behind a number of disciples, some organized in a secret society, whom he had instructed in political action and agitation.

Discontent over the Shah's concession policy came to a head after he conceded a complete monopoly over the production, sale and export of all Iranian tobacco to a British subject, encouraged by Wolff, in March 1890. The concession was kept a secret for a time, but in late 1890 the newspaper *Akhtar* began a series of articles severely criticizing the concession. The January 1891 leaflet that brought about Afghānī's expulsion attacked the tobacco concession among others, and new critical leaflets were issued by Afghānī's followers in the spring. The tobacco concession brought far more protest than any other because it did not, like the others, deal with spheres that were unexploited, or only slightly exploited, by Iranian businessmen, but rather with a product already widely grown throughout Iran, and profiting many landholders, large and small merchants, shopkeepers and exporters.

Massive protests against the concession began in the spring of 1891, when the tobacco company's agents began to arrive and to post deadlines for the sale of all tobacco to the company. The first major protest, led by a religious leader, came in Shīrāz, and this leader was exiled to Iraq. There he conferred with Afghānī, who now wrote his famous letter to the most important leader of the Shīʿī ʿulamā, Hājjī Mīrzā Ḥasan Shīrāzī, asking him to denounce the Shah and his sale of Iran to Europeans. Some writers to the contrary notwithstanding, Shīrāzī did not immediately take any strong action, but he did write privately to the Shah making many of the points that Afghānī had made to him. A dangerously revolutionary movement now broke out in Tabrīz, where the government was forced to suspend the concession operation, and mass, largely merchant- and ʿulamā-led protests spread to Mashhad, Iṣfahān, Tehran and elsewhere. In December 1891, the movement culminated in an incredibly successful nation-wide boycott on the sale and use of tobacco, observed even by the Shah's wives and by non-Muslims, which was based on an order either issued by, or more likely, attributed to Shīrāzī, which he subsequently confirmed. The government tried to suppress only the company's internal monopoly, leaving it with an export monopoly, but this proved impossible. A mass demonstration in Tehran culminating in the shooting on an unarmed crowd causing several deaths, followed by even more massive protests, forced the government to cancel the entire concesson in early 1892. The affair left the Iranians with their first foreign

debt – £500,000 from the British owned Imperial Bank for exorbitant compensation to the company. The movement was the first successful mass protest in modern Iran, combining ᶜulamā, modernists, merchants, and townspeople in a coordinated movement against government policy. The movement's coordination throughout Iran and with the mujtahids of Iraq was facilitated by the existence and heavy use of the telegraph. Although many of the ᶜulamā were now bought off by the government and some quiet years followed, the "religious-radical alliance" had shown its potential for changing the course of Iranian policy, and the government did not grant further economic concessions for several years.

The tobacco movement also encouraged the growth of Russian influence at the expense of the British. To preserve his position, Amīn al-Sulṭān felt it necessary to assure the Russians that he would henceforth be oriented towards them, and his later policies bore this out. The British policy of 1888–90, of encouraging economic concessions by the Shah – a policy favoured by Lord Salisbury and the Foreign Office, and pushed with special energy by Wolff – had backfired, as Russian counterconcessions and Russian support against the tobacco concession culminated in an increase in Russian, and not British, influence. Those who, looking only at the years 1888–90, dub the Wolff ministry, which ended in 1890, a success close their eyes to the implicitly anti-British revolt and the rise of Russian influence which were, in fact, the most important international political consequences of that policy, as many contemporaries recognized.[20]

ᶜUlamā opposition to the Shah temporarily died down as many ᶜulamā were bought off, but attacks on the government from abroad continued. From London, Afghānī contributed strong articles to Malkum's *Qānūn*, and printed a letter sent out to Shīᶜī ᶜulamā in Iraq and Iran calling on them to depose the Shah. Late in 1892, Afghānī went to Istanbul as a guest of Sultan Abdulhamid, who kept him from publishing further attacks on the Shah, but encouraged him to spread pan-Islamic propaganda among Iranians and other Shīᶜīs, calling on them to lend support to the Ottoman Sultan-Caliph. With this aim Afghānī formed an Iranian Shīᶜī pan-Islamic circle in Istanbul, two of whose prominent members were Azalī Bābīs who had by now become radical freethinkers – Mīrzā Āqā Khān Kirmānī, a writer and editor of *Akhtar*, and his close friend, the poet and teacher Shaikh Aḥmad Rūḥī, also of Kirmān. The circle sent out numerous

[20] The French minister in Tehran, M.R.D. DeBalloy wrote in 1891 referring to Wolff: "This man thinks only of making noise and fame for himself." See Keddie, *Religion and Rebellion in Iran*, pp. 100–1.

letters to the Shīʿī ʿulamā in Iran and elsewhere calling on them to give allegiance to the Sultan-Caliph. The Iranian Embassy complained of this activity, implicitly directed at weakening the authority of the Shah (which helps explain the participation of irreligious anti-Shah radicals in an apparently religious activity). The Ottoman Sultan agreed to the extradition of Rūḥī, Kirmānī, and a third Iranian, Khabīr al-Mulk. While the three were waiting in prison in Trabzon, however, Afghānī intervened for them, and the Sultan agreed not to send them to Iran.

Meanwhile, the devoted Iranian servant and follower of Afghānī, Mīrzā Riżā Kirmānī, who had been imprisoned for years for anti-government activities, arrived to visit Afghānī in Istanbul in 1895. There Afghānī seems to have given him the idea of returning to Iran to kill the Shah.[21] After his return to Iran, Mīrzā Riżā made his way to Shāhzāda ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm, a Shīʿī shrine, at the time that the Shah was planning to visit it in preparation for the celebration of the 50th lunar anniversary of his reign. Mīrzā Riżā pretended to be a petitioner and suddenly shot the Shah on 1 May 1896. Immediately after, he was attacked by a crowd of women present in the shrine and lost an ear before he was saved by Amīn al-Sulṭān. The Shah was whisked away from public view, and his dead body was propped up in a carriage while Amīn al-Sulṭān pretended to carry on a conversation with him – this in order to avoid the disorders and rebellions that often accompanied a change of ruler. The Cossacks were notified to cover Tehran, and disorder was avoided. Further anxiety concerned possible pretentions to the throne by two of the Shah's powerful sons. Ẓill al-Sulṭān, the Shah's oldest living son who was excluded from succession due to his mother's low birth, had a long history of political power and ambition. Feared and powerful as the oppressive governor of a large group of southern provinces, he had built up a virtual private army of western-trained soldiers that put most of the regular army to shame, and had not hesitated to kill a major Bakhtiyārī chief and put down violently anyone he considered a threat.[22] His ambition to take the throne in place of his weak and sickly half-brother, the Crown Prince Muẓaffar al-Dīn, was well known. Concern was also felt about his young brother, Kāmrān Mīrzā Nāʾib al-Salṭana, frequently army chief and/or governor of Tehran, who had the advantage of being on the scene in Tehran. The combination of Amīn al-Sulṭān, the Cossacks, and the clearly expressed support of both Russians and

[21] For a fuller discussion of Mīrzā Riżā's relations with al-Afghānī, see Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din "al-Afghani"*. For the text of Mīrzā Riżā's interrogation in which he implicates al-Afghānī, see E.G. Browne, *The Persian Revolution*, pp. 63–85.

[22] For an autobiography of Ẓill al-Sulṭān, see Masʿūd Mīrzā Ẓill al-Sulṭān, *Sarguẕasht-i Masʿūdī*.

British for the legitimate heir, however, brought expressions of loyalty to Muẓaffar al-Dīn by both brothers.

Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh was scarcely an illustrious or progressive ruler, but he was a relatively powerful one, under whose rule there were few serious tribal disorders or local revolts. The disorders he faced were more directly political, and he or his advisors had at least the negative virtue of knowing when it was necessary to bend or give in. Unlike his son he did not squander his treasury, and the loan raised to pay compensation to the tobacco company remained his only foreign loan. His interest in reform was sporadic at best, and he sacrificed or crippled the power of his only two serious reforming chief ministers when faced by the opposition of vested interests. In his last years he lost even this much interest in reform – a supposed project for codifying laws after the 1889 European trip came to nothing. Instead, he turned to the consolation of women and of a repulsive boy protégé, and to acquiring as much money and treasure as possible, without spending it for any public purpose. He left no legacy of a state or army machinery that might weather the eventuality he must have known was coming – the rule of a weak and sickly successor.

Not all of Nāṣir al-Dīn's actions had negative results however. His patronage of the arts contributed to innovations in music, painting, and calligraphy. He also took a keen interest in poetry, and even tried his hand at writing poems. Significant literary novelties developed during his reign, many of which originated with court poets. Writers, who became important in political protest before and during the Constitutional period, took important steps towards reforming the archaic character of Persian prose. Increased Western contacts influenced many of these innovations. Several European works were translated. A few modern schools and medical clinics were established, mostly by European missionaries. Other new services included the establishment of the first modern police force in Tehran with the advice of an Austrian officer (1879). City services in Tehran, such as cleaning, paving and lighting streets, collection of refuse and maintenance of public parks got their first impetus towards the end of this period. In addition to these, telegraphs, regular newspapers, and banking and limited insurance services were introduced in Iran for the first time during Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's reign.[23] Postal services also expanded and first postage stamps were circulated (1868). In comparison with countries like Egypt and Ottoman Turkey, however, these changes were limited.

[23] Ḥ. Maḥbūbī Ardakānī, II (Tehran, 1978).

Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh's relatively mild nature was shown in his treatment of Mīrzā Riżā Kirmānī, who was extensively interrogated but not tortured before he was hanged. The Iranian government also demanded from the Ottomans the extradition of Afghānī and of his three followers still jailed in Trabzon. Sultan Abdulhamid still refused to return Afghānī, claiming he was an Afghan and not subject to Iranian jurisdiction. The three unfortunate progressives in Trabzon, however, who had no connection with the Shah's assassination, were extradited, and the cruel new crown prince, Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, had them summarily executed in Tabrīz. Continued Iranian demands for Afghānī's extradition (Mīrzā Riżā having said that Afghānī was the only other person involved in the assassination) stopped when Afghānī became extremely ill with cancer, and died in 1897.

Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh's weak character did not prevent him from being open to reformist forces. He allowed the return to activity of a man nicknamed "Rushdiyya" because he had set up a modernized type of "Rushdiyya" higher school on the Ottoman model in Tabrīz, where it met with overwhelming religious hostility. Such schools were now opened for the first time in Tehran. The Shah also dismissed the unpopular Amīn al-Sulṭān and, later, appointed the reformist Amīn al-Daula to be chief minister in August 1897. The Shah, however, had paid off his father's huge harem extravagently, and now was continuously eager to have money to meet the incessant demands of his own courtiers, many of whom had come with him from Tabrīz and pressed to make up for the years of relatively lean waiting. The Shah's doctors also advised trips to European watering spots, and he wanted money for this too. When Amīn al-Daula was unable to raise a new loan from the British, and when his reformist attempts in law, administration of finance, and education aroused the opposition of ʿulamā and courtiers, he was dismissed and Amīn al-Sulṭān was brought back as premier in 1898. Amīn al-Daula's efforts for fiscal reform and centralization, like similar measures attempted by reforming ministers before him, were frustrated by opposition from court vested-interest groups and some government officials and ʿulamā. His abolition of the *barāt* system (assignment of drafts to be collected from provincial treasuries) made officials dependent for their salaries on the central treasury, which they saw as an ineffective tax collector and an unreliable provider of income. Reorganization of finances also meant a cut in court spending, which affected the entire ruling family including the Shah.[24]

[24] Afżal al-Mulk, *Afẓal al-Tavārīkh*, pp. 234–5.

One of Amīn al-Daula's projects was to invite in some Belgian customs administrators to reorganize the customs, which had been farmed out region by region, resulting in customs farmers underbidding each other, below the already low 5% limit, in order to attract trade, and also in farmers collecting far more than they paid in. The Belgian experiment was extended under Amīn al-Sulṭān, and the leader of the Belgians, Naus, was made Minister of Customs. This resulted in an increase in efficiency and collection, but also widespread complaints by Iranian merchants that they were discriminated against in favour of foreigners, particularly the Russians, with whom the Belgians had close relations. The exact validity of these charges is unclear, but it is clear that many Iranian merchants had now to pay more than formerly, and that they blamed this on the Shah, the prime minister, and the presence of foreigners. Naus's influence soon extended far beyond customs, and he became *de facto* Minister of Finance.

In order to pay for the foreign trips recommended by the Shah's doctors, Amīn al-Sulṭān floated two large loans from Russia, in 1900 and 1902. The first loan required Iran to pay off its British debts and not to incur any other debts without Russian consent, while the second one included major economic concessions. The Russians also insisted on a new customs treaty, which was signed in 1902, and gave key Russian goods lower rates than the already low 5% *ad valorem*. The income gained from the loans and from customs reform was not used productively, and went largely for the three extravagantly expensive trips to Europe which the Shah and his entourage took between 1900 and 1905.

Meanwhile, discontent with the government was becoming organized once again. Secret oppositional societies became active in Tehran and elsewhere, and distributed inflammatory leaflets, called *shabnāmas* (night letters) because of their night-time distribution, against the government in 1900 and 1901. Some members of the societies were afterwards discovered and arrested. A new coalition among some of the leading ʿulamā, courtiers, and secular progressives began to focus on the dismissal of Amīn al-Sulṭān, who was seen as responsible for the alarming growth of loans and concessions to the Russians that were leading to Russian control of Iran. Even the British, alarmed at the growth of Russian influence, gave some money and encouragement to leading members of the ʿulamā in Tehran and in the shrine cities of Iraq to help arouse activity against the Russian-favoured trade agreement. This opposition movement also called for the removal of Belgian customs officials and closure of newly established modern schools. These agitations were accompanied by an outburst of anti-foreign and anti-minority feelings in a few cities, instigated by some of the ʿulamā. Chief among these were the anti-Bahāʾī riots of the summer of 1903

which led to the killing of dozens of Bahāʾīs in Iṣfahān and Yazd. The Bahāʾīs were easier scapegoats than the foreign subjects residing in Iran.[25]

Although unable to stop the 1902 loan from Russia as they had tried, the opposition became menacing enough to help force the dismissal of Amīn al-Sulṭān (now adorned with the higher title of *Atābak*) in September 1903. A decree execrating the Atābak as an unbeliever attributed to the leading Shīʿī ʿulamā of Iraq was widely circulated and believed, although doubts were cast on its authenticity.[26]

The Shah now appointed a reactionary relative of his, ʿAin al-Daula, as premier, but popular protests against the Belgian customs officials and against high prices continued. Secret societies grew, and some helped to educate their members by reading and disseminating critical literature about Iran written in Persian abroad. This literature formed the basis for the ideological awakening of many Iranians who had not travelled abroad or received modern education. It included the works of men of Persian Āẕarbāījānī origin living in Russian Transcaucasia, such as Fatḥ ʿAlī Akhundov, whose father had migrated from Iranian Āẕarbāījān. His anonymous *Kamāl al-Daula va Jalāl al-Daula*, a collection of fictitious epistles describing conditions in Iran, was bitterly critical. A similar series of Persian letters was imitated by Mīrzā Āqā Khān Kirmānī, who also wrote other books and articles critical of Iranian conditions. Also widely read were the educational works of Talibov, an Āẕarbāījānī émigré to Transcaucasia, and especially the "Travelbook of Ibrahim Beg" by Zain al-ʿĀbidīn Marāghaʾī, a book of fictitious travels in Iran that mercilessly exposed the evils of Iranian society. Less known, but not without influence, were other critical works, such as the translation of James Morier's *Hajji Baba of Isfahan* by Mīrzā Ḥabīb Iṣfahānī, which added sharpness and a more contemporary flavour of criticism to the original. The "True Dream" by the progressive preachers from Iṣfahān, Jamāl al-Dīn Iṣfahānī and Malik al-Mutakallimīn, criticized under false names such high ranking ʿulamā as the notorious Āqā Najafī, who used their position to add to their wealth and power, and corrupt governors such as Ẓill al-Sulṭān.[27] Such fiction reinforced the impression created by the reformist political writings of Malkum Khān and others, and by the newspapers published abroad and sent into Iran (with greater freedom under Muẓaffar al-Dīn than under

[25] Kazemzadeh, *op. cit.*, pp. 454–7. See also Keddie, "Iranian Politics 1900–1905: Background to Revolution-II".

[26] Kasravi, *Tārīkh-i Mashrūṭa-yi Īrān*, p. 32.

[27] Excerpts from the *True Dream* are quoted by M.A. Jamalzāda in *Sar-ū Tah-i Yak Karbās* I, pp. 94–113. (Unfortunately, these excerpts have been omitted in the English translation of this work by W.L. Heston, *Isfahan is Half the World*, Princeton, 1983).

Nāṣir al-Dīn), which were now joined by *Parvarish* and *Ṣurayyā* from Cairo and *Ḥabl al-Matīn* from Calcutta. The legally distributed papers in Iran continued to be only official or semi-official ones.[28]

Some Iranians now began to plan revolutionary action, and revolutionary sentiment was strengthened by the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–5 and the Russian Revolution of 1905. Iranians knew that Russia would intervene against any attempt to overthrow or undermine Qājār government, but with the Russian government fully occupied first with war and then with revolution, it was clearly a propitious time to move. In addition, the strength shown by the recently backward Japanese against the dreaded Russians gave people courage, as did the possibility of shaking by revolution such a potent autocracy as that of Russia. The sight of the only Asian constitutional power defeating the only major European nonconstitutional power not only showed formerly weak Asians overcoming the seemingly omnipotent West, but aroused much new interest in Iran as elsewhere in Asia in a constitution as a "secret of strength".

The Iranian Constitutional Revolution is usually dated from December 1905, when the governor of Tehran bastinadoed a group of sugar merchants for not lowering their raised sugar prices. Merchants were joined by a large group of mullas and tradesmen who then took sanctuary (bast) in the Royal Mosque of Tehran, whence they were dispersed by agents of ʿAin al-Daula with the help of the Imām Jumʿa of Tehran, a leading pro-government cleric. A group of ʿulamā then decided, at the suggestion of the prominent reforming mujtahid, Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭabāṭabāʾī, to retire to the shrine of Shāhzāda ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm, south of Tehran. There they were joined by a crowd of some 2,000 religious students, middle- and low-ranking mullas, merchants and common people. The bast took 25 days and was financed by discontented merchants and rivals of ʿAin al-Daula, including supporters of Amīn al-Sulṭān.[29] The crucial demand was for a representative *ʿadālatkhāna* ("house of justice") of which the meaning and composition were not spelled out – perhaps in order to maintain the unity of modernizers and traditional ʿulamā. The Shah dismissed the unpopular governor of Tehran, and in January 1906, agreed to the ʿadālatkhāna, upon which the ʿulamā returned to Tehran and were received with enthusiasm. The Shah and ʿAin al-Daula showed no sign of fulfilling the promise, however, and further agitation against the government by the popular and radical preachers, Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn

[28] For the press before and during the Constitutional period, see E.G. Browne, *Literary History of Persia* IV; *idem*, *Press and Poetry of Persia*; S. Soroudi, "Poets and Revolution: The Impact of Iran's Constitutional Revolution on the Social and Literary Outlook of the Poets of the Time." Y. Āryanpūr, *Az Ṣabā Tā Nīmā*; and S. Ṣadr Hāshimī, *Tārīkh-i Jarāʾid va Majallāt-i Īrān*.

[29] Browne, *Persian Revolution*, p. 113; see also Kasravi *op. cit.* pp. 60–2.

Iṣfahānī and Shaikh Muḥammad Vāʿiẓ, increased, and provided a potent means of mass political enlightenment in the absence of an open oppositional press. Sayyid Jamāl was expelled from Tehran, and the government ordered Shaikh Muḥammad to be expelled too. On 11 July 1906, confronting a strong popular attempt to keep Shaikh Muḥammad from being expelled, an officer killed a young sayyid. After this a great mass of mullas and some others left Tehran to take bast in Qum, on 20 July 1906, while even greater numbers of merchants and tradesmen, reaching 12,000–14,000, took a week-long bast in the grounds of the British legation in Tehran (British personnel then being in summer quarters in Qulhak), while Tehran business was at a standstill. Inside the legation grounds the protesters were organized according to their guild affiliations, each guild having its own tent and cooking equipment. Revolutionary propaganda was propagated by the preachers present. Now the protestors demanded and finally got not only the dismissal of ʿAin al-Daula, but also a representative assembly or *majlis* – an idea put forth by the constitutionalists. Although not yet demanded by the movement, the word constitution, *mashrūṭiyyat*, began to be voiced by the advanced reformers.

At the end of July the Shah dismissed ʿAin al-Daula, and early in August he accepted the *majlis*. The first Majlis (Assembly) was elected by a six-class division of electors that gave far greater representation to the guilds (who comprised mainly middle- and lower-middle-class elements) than they found in subsequent Majlises elected by a one-class system dominated by the landlords and the rich. Tehran, the most politically advanced city aside from Tabrīz, got disproportionate representation (60 out of 156 deputies were from Tehran). The first Majlis opened in October 1906, as soon as the Tehran deputies were elected. A committee was assigned to write the Fundamental Law, which the Shah delayed signing until he was mortally ill, in December 1906. A longer Supplementary Fundamental Law was added in 1907, and signed by the new Shah, Muḥammad ʿAlī, in October. These two documents, based largely on the Belgian constitution, formed the core of the Iranian constitution until 1979. These documents were more honoured in the breach than the observance after 1912, and especially after 1925. The clear intent of the constitution was to set up a truly constitutional monarchy in which Majlis approval was required on all important matters, including foreign loans and treaties, and in which ministers would be responsible to the Majlis. Equality before the law and personal rights and freedoms, subject to a few limits, were also guaranteed, despite the protests of the ʿulamā that members of minority religions should not have equal status with those of the state religion, Islam. The Majlis also passed laws guaranteeing

compulsory public education and free press. The ʿulamā opposed these laws as being anti-Islamic. The Majlis quickly showed its patriotism by refusing a new Russian loan and beginning plans for a national bank instead, which, however, ultimately foundered due to lack of capital. Two conservative provisions, for a group of mujtahids to rule on the compatibility of laws with Islam and for a half-appointed upper-house, were not enforced, although the Senate was created on Muḥammad Riżā Shāh's initiative after World War II.

The new freedoms of press and assembly brought about a sudden flourishing of newspapers, which not only carried direct political news and comments, but also published some of the best new poetry and satire. Particularly noteworthy was the *Ṣūr-i Isrāfīl* with its poems and the brilliant political satire of the young Dihkhudā. Revolutionary societies or *anjuman*s were formed throughout Iran, some of them based on older guilds or fraternal groups, which now became actively involved in politics. The term *anjuman* was also used for the city councils, usually elected, which now appeared for the first time in many cities with parliamentary encouragement.

In January 1907, the mild and ineffectual Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh died, and was succeeded by his cruel and autocratic son, Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāh. Although the new Shah had to take an oath to support the constitution, he did not invite any Majlis deputies to his coronation, and he recalled as prime minister the Atābak, who had been travelling abroad since his dismissal in 1903. Since the constitution was not categorical about who really appointed the prime minister, and the Majlis wished to avoid a direct clash with the new Shah, they accepted the appointment despite hostile telegrams from anjumans and internal arguments. Conflicts over the Atābak's return and over the constitution occurred between the conservative party in the Majlis, led by the two prime mujtahids of the revolution, Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭabāṭabāʾī and the less principled Sayyid ʿAbd-Allāh Bihbahānī, and by liberal officials, and the smaller democratic left, represented especially by the deputies from the progressive city of Tabrīz led by the patriotic young Sayyid Ḥasan Taqīzāda. Tabrīz and its surrounding province of Āẕarbāījān made up the advanced body of the revolution. More modernized economically, heavily involved in international trade, and in contact through travel and emigration with the similarly Turkish-speaking areas of Istanbul and Russian Transcaucasia (where many thousands emigrated temporarily or permanently every year, and from whence arms were imported), Tabrīz was uniquely situated to play a vanguard rôle.

The Atābak did not fulfill the Shah's hope that he would get rid of the Majlis, but rather tried to strike a compromise between the Shah and courtiers and the

Majlis conservatives. In so doing, he aroused the distrust of both the autocrats and the radicals. He was assassinated by a member of a radical group on 31 August 1907, but there is convincing evidence that the Shah was also planning his assassination and may even have penetrated the assassin's group.[30] The Shah hoped to use the assassination as an excuse to suppress the revolutionaries, but in fact, it encouraged them and increased their strength and boldness.

On the same date, 31 August 1907, the Anglo-Russian Treaty settling their differences in Tibet, Afghanistan, and Iran was signed. The growth of the German threat encouraged this treaty, which hurt Iranians, who had counted on British help against Russian intervention. The treaty divided Iran into three spheres, with northern and central Iran, including Tehran and Iṣfahān, in the Russian sphere; south-east Iran in the British sphere; and an area in between (ironically including the area where oil was first found in 1908) in the neutral zone. The Iranians were neither consulted on the agreement nor informed as to its terms when it was signed.

After an unsuccessful assassination attempt on the Shah, and an equally unsuccessful coup attempt by the Shah, the Shah executed a successful coup with the help of the Russian-led Cossack Brigade in June 1908. The Majlis was closed and many popular nationalist leaders, especially those of more advanced views, were arrested and executed. The radical preachers, Jamāl al-Dīn Iṣfahānī, caught while trying to flee, Malik al-Mutakallimīn, and the editor of *Ṣūr-ī Isrāfīl*, Mīrzā Jahāngīr Khān (the last two had Azalī Bābī ties) were among those killed. Taqīzāda (and some others) found refuge in the British Legation, whence he went abroad for a time. While the rest of the country bowed to royal control, the city of Tabrīz which, exceptionally, had an armed and drilled popular guard, held out against royal forces. The leaders of this popular resistance were brave men of humble origin. One of them, Sattār Khān, had defied the royal order to put up white flags as a sign of surrender to the approaching royal forces, and had instead gone around with his men tearing down white flags, thus initiating the Tabrīz resistance. With the help of his co-leader, Bāqir Khān, Sattār Khān and their men held out for months against an effective siege by royalist troops. When food supplies became critical the Russians sent troops into Tabrīz ostensibly to protect Europeans, but effectively they took over. Many of the popular forces, known alternatively as mujāhids or *fidāʾī*s, both implying self-sacrificing fighters for the faith, left for the nearby Caspian province of Gīlān, where they were joined by a local revolutionary armed force, and together they began a march on

[30] Keddie, "The Assassination of Amin as-Sultan (Atabak-i Aʿzam) 31 August 1907".

Tehran. Meanwhile the Bakhtiyārī tribe, which had several grudges against the Qājārs, and had some leaders who were genuinely liberal and others who wanted to get much of the power of the central government into their own hands, helped to liberate Iṣfahān from royalist forces and began moving northwards toward Tehran. The Bakhtiyārīs and the northern revolutionaries converged on Tehran in July 1909; the Shah took refuge with the Russians and his minor son Aḥmad was made Shah with the Qājār prince, ʿAżud al-Mulk and, later, the conservative Oxford-educated Nāṣir al-Mulk as regents.

In his opposition to the Majlis, Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāh was assisted by a number of high-ranking ʿulamā. Foremost among them were Shaikh Fażl-Allāh Nūrī, later hanged by Constitutionalists in 1909, and Sayyid Muḥammad Yazdī of the Iraqi shrine cities. These clerics initially saw the movement as an opportunity to increase their political influence and prevent Westernizing reforms. By 1907, when the liberals had gained the upper hand in radicalizing and secularizing the movement, the conservative elements shifted sides and began to oppose the constitution.[31] The second Majlis was elected under a new electoral law calling for a single class of voters, and was marked by differences between what were now considered parties – the Moderates, led by Bihbahānī, who was assassinated by an extremist in 1910, and the new Democratic Party led by men like Taqīzāda, who was forced to leave Iran after Bihbahānī's assassination, with which he was surely unconnected.

Iran's chief problem remained finances, with the related problem of re-establishing control over the provinces, many of which were more subject than ever to tribal disorders and robberies, and remitted little of their due taxes. Desiring a foreigner unconnected with the British or the Russians, the Iranians brought a young American expert, Morgan Shuster, to control and reform their finances. Shuster proposed to set up a tax-collecting gendarmerie, and to head it he proposed an officer in the British Indian army, then with the British Legation in Tehran, Major Stokes, who agreed to resign his commission and position. The Russians protested that the Anglo-Russian Agreement meant that they should control any such officials in the north, and convinced the British to support their position. In November 1911, the Russians sent an ultimatum demanding the dismissal of Shuster and the agreement of Iran not to engage foreigners without British and Russian consent. The Majlis rejected the ultimatum, but as Russian troops advanced toward Tehran the more compliant Nāṣir al-Mulk and the "moderate" and heavily Bakhtiyārī cabinet forcibly

[31] Arjomand, "The Ulama's Traditionalist Opposition to Parliamentarianism: 1907–1909".

dissolved the second Majlis, accepted the ultimatum, and dismissed Shuster, in December 1911.

These events marked the real end of the revolution, which may be considered a short-term failure, but which left a considerable legacy. In addition to the constitution itself, a series of financial reforms ending feudal grants and regularizing financial practices remained as a legacy, as did a move toward greater civil jurisdiction in the courts, and the Majlis as a guardian against certain foreign encroachments. Another important new feature of the period before and during the revolution was the entry of women into the political arena. Although women had long participated in bread riots, they now staged some political demonstrations, and Tehran had a women's anjuman and a women's newspaper. This trend was to grow significantly after World War I, when several short-lived women's newspapers advocated the need for improvement of the status of women, especially through promotion of education. Women's organizations, however, were often disrupted by conservative ᶜulamā and others.[32]

Although the constitution was never abrogated, no new Majlis was elected until 1914 and Russian troops continued to occupy northern Iran, while the anjumans were dissolved, the Press was censored and power returned to a conservative cabinet under vigilant British and especially Russian control. Despite the constitution and political awakening that remained as positive achievements, many people reverted to apathy and cynicism when faced by the restoration of foreign and conservative controls.

In 1901, a British subject, D'Arcy, had been granted a concession for oil in all Iran except the five northern provinces – Russian reaction being forestalled by the ruse of presenting the (Persian) text of the concession to the Russian legation at a time when the chief minister knew that the Russians' translator was away. Although the first years' explorations were discouraging, oil was finally struck in the southwest in 1908. In 1912 the British navy converted from coal to oil and in 1914 the British government bought a majority of shares in the company holding the concession.[33] The company backed the virtually autonomous Shaikh Khazᶜal, the most powerful Arab leader in Khūzistān province, and also entered into independent relations with the adjacent region, and the British exercised a control in the south quite comparable to that held by Russia in the north. Given their experience with the British and Russians for decades, it was no wonder that many Iranian nationalists and democrats turned to the Germans for support during World War I.

[32] E. Sanasarian, *Women's Rights Movement in Iran.*

[33] For a detailed account of these developments, see Ferrier, *op. cit.*

The coronation of the 17-year-old Aḥmad Shāh in July 1914 took place eight days before the outbreak of World War I. When World War I began, the Iranian government declared its neutrality, but Iran was nonetheless used as a battlefield by four powers, with Turks moving into Āẕarbāījān in 1914 after the Russians had to withdraw their troops. Iranians took advantage of the Russian withdrawal to elect the third Majlis late in 1914. It opened in January 1915 and attempted further abortive financial reforms. As part of a secret Anglo-Russian treaty of 1915 promising Russia control of Istanbul and the Straits, the Russians granted the British post-war control of the Iranian neutral zone in addition to the British zone. In 1915 the "German Lawrence", Wassmuss, organized a tribal revolt in the south against the British. In Tehran the government, pressured by pro-German nationalist deputies, entered secret negotiations with the German envoy for joining the Central Powers in return for guarantees of territorial integrity and military assistance. Meanwhile, the Russians defeated the Turks and reached Qazvīn, 60 miles from Tehran. Fearing a Russian take-over of the capital, the Tehran government decided to move the capital to Iṣfahān in order to receive German support. The Russians prevented this move by threatening to depose the young Shah and to bring back his exiled father Muḥammad ʿAlī.[34] However, a group of pro-German nationalist deputies left Tehran to set up the Committee for National Defence in Qum and thereby managed to dissolve the third Majlis. In face of Russian advances, they had to retreat to Kirmānshāh where they received further financial assistance from Germany to organize tribal forces against the British and the Russians. Once defeated and expelled, many fled to Istanbul and Berlin to carry out pro-Central-Powers propaganda. To counter pro-German activities, the British regained control of the south in 1916 by forming a local military force, the South Persia Rifles, under Sir Percy Sykes, and supplied arms and money to Bakhtiyārī tribes and Arab tribes, the latter under Shaikh Khazʿal.

The war brought devastation, disruption and famine to Iran. This political and economic crisis was exacerbated by an emotionally disturbed and indecisive Shah, constant tribal disturbance, separatist and rebellious movements and foreign intervention. The outcome was a multitude of short-lived cabinets, which helped reduce the authority of the central government to a bare minimum. Popular reformist, secessionist, and revolutionary movements began throughout Iran, bringing political disintegration at the centre. A partially Islamic revolutionary group, the *Jangalīs*, under a local nationalist preacher,

[34] M. Sepehr, *Īrān dar Jang-i Buzurg*, p. 239.

Kūchik Khān, took control of Gīlān province in 1917–18. Revolutionary feeling was encouraged by the February and especially October revolutions in Russia. In June, 1919 the Bolsheviks renounced the unequal loans, treaties and concessions Russia had been granted in Iran, thus gaining in popularity. Adding to disruption and discontent was a terrible famine in 1918–19, which was as usual worsened by hoarders and speculators.

With Russian troops out and the Central Powers beaten, the British were the only important outside military and economic power in Iran. The British, and especially the Foreign Secretary, Curzon, hoped to extend British rule or protectorates over most of the Middle East, and especially in oil rich Iraq and Iran. In 1919, the British negotiated a treaty (signed after large bribes were given to premier Vus̱ūq al-Daula and two other ministers), which made Britain the sole supplier of foreign advisors, officers, arms, communications, transport, and loans, and promising a pro-British tariff revision. Involving a loan of two million pounds sterling, the treaty was widely interpreted as meaning a British protectorate.

U.S. and French representatives protested, and Iranians noted that according to their constitution no treaty could be concluded without Majlis ratification; nonetheless, the British began to act as if the treaty were in force, sending financial, military, and administrative missions. Widespread opposition towards the treaty was expressed in demonstrations and newspaper articles. The Democratic Party of Āẕarbāījān, under the leadership of Shaikh Muḥammad Khiyābānī, set up self-government in the province and forced the central government's agents to quit Tabrīz. The autonomous provincial government formed by Khiyābānī in Āẕarbāījān, came under attack by rebellious tribes and finally came to an end upon his murder by the Cossacks in Tabrīz in September 1920.[35] In Gīlān, Red Army troops landed at Anzalī in the Spring of 1920, to chase out White Russian forces, and there ensued a temporary coalition between Kūchik Khān and the newly formed Communist Party of Iran, a coalition which in June declared a Soviet Socialist Republic, even though no socialist measures were taken.[36] This coalition soon came to an end when the landowning, pro-Islamic Jangalis quarrelled with radical leftists.

The combination of Iranian and foreign opposition to the pro-British cabinet and the Anglo-Persian Treaty of 1919 forced Vus̱ūq al-Daula to resign in July

[35] For a fuller discussion of Khiyābānī and other separatist movements, see Cottam, *Nationalism in Iran*.

[36] For a full discussion of the Communist Movement in Iran, see Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*.

1920. A moderate nationalist government under Mushīr al-Daula now declared the treaty suspended until foreign troops should quit Iran and the Majlis could debate freely. Although the next premier, the Sipahdār, was pro-British and put British officers in command of the Cossack Brigade, and prepared to submit the 1919 treaty to a newly elected Majlis, he never dared bring the treaty to a vote, and in effect it soon lapsed. The government now suppressed the autonomy movement in Āẕarbāījān with the aid of the Cossack Brigade, but there continued to be risings in the provinces. The Gīlān Jangalis extended their rule to neighbouring Māzandarān, but were wracked by disagreement between the Communists and Kūchik Khān.

By early 1921, the British stopped pressing for the 1919 treaty, and some British leaders thought rather of trying to install a strong Iranian government that would guard against revolutions and would bring "law and order" to disrupted Iran. The manuscript diary of Major General Edmund Ironside, then head of a British force in Iran, shows that he consulted with a strong and able colonel in the Cossack Brigade, Riżā Khān, and assured him of benevolent British non-interference in the event of his taking over the government. Ironside failed to get the young, weak Aḥmad Shāh to agree to Riżā Khān's rule, and a few days later, in February 1921, Riżā Khān's Cossacks entered Tehran and overthrew the Sipahdār government. A new government was set up after this *coup d'état* with a pro-British but nationalist journalist, Sayyid Żiyā al-Dīn Ṭabāṭabāʾī, as premier, while Riżā Khān was to be the Minister of War. The new government ordered the arrest of some 60 of the members of the ruling élite who were soon released. To meet the democratic and nationalist demands that were widespread in Iran, Sayyid Żiyā promised land reform, national independence, and other reforms, and annulled the Anglo-Persian Treaty. He also completed pending negotiations for an Irano-Soviet Treaty, signed late in February, which renounced all Russian loans, concessions, and special privileges in Iran with the exception of the Russian Caspian Fisheries concession, which had brought the Russians great profits from caviare production since its negotiation in the late nineteenth century. The treaty had an article permitting the Russians to send in troops against the troops of any third power using Iran as a base against Russia. Directed originally against the White Russians and their foreign allies, the article was cited after World War II by the Soviet Union against American troops in northern Iran, although no Russian troops were sent against them. This treaty and the British strategic retreat in the face of the force of nationalist sentiment gave considerable impetus to greater economic and political self-determination for Iran.

Quarrels between Rižā Khān and Sayyid Żiyā forced the latter to resign and to quit Iran for over two decades. Qavām al-Salṭana now became premier, and the fourth Majlis opened in June 1921, but real power was increasingly in the hands of Rižā Khān. Rižā Khān moved to re-establish central control over rebellious areas, especially Gīlān, where, in late 1921, Kūchik Khān expelled the leftists from his government. Such internal discord made it fairly easy for Rižā Khān to send troops and defeat the Jangalis at the end of 1921. The year also saw a revolt among the tribes and others in Khurāsān, where a short-lived provincial government of Khurāsān was formed under the gendarmerie colonel, Muḥammad Taqī Khān Pisyān, with the help of other Democratic Party members. This movement came to an end late in 1921 when Colonel Pisyān was killed fighting tribal insurgents. The post-war popular movements had suffered from geographical and ideological divisions, lack of unified leadership, and the willingness of the British to be forced into a partial retreat in favour of a strong non-radical government. These disunited movements could thus be put down one by one; they had contributed, however, to the nullification of a British protectorate, and had given impetus to the need for a reformist strongman who would bring Iran security and political stability. The new régime adopted some of the modernizing, centralizing, and nationalistic goals of the reformers and revolutionaries without permitting popular participation in government or fundamental economic changes to improve the lives of workers, peasants, and tribespeople. The régime won over many moderate nationalists frightened of revolution and disorder.

Sprung from a very modest family in Māzandarān and having a limited education, Rižā Khān was a self-made man whose successful career and forcefulness in the Cossack Brigade as well as his political skill gave him the background needed to be a man of destiny at a crucial turning point in Iranian history. Rapidly increasing his control over the Iranian government, he first took complete control of the existing armed forces, including the South Persia Rifles and the gendarmerie. In October 1923, he became prime minister and continued to augment his authority. In 1925, he adopted the family name Pahlavī, that of an ancient Iranian language, thus emphasizing pre-Islamic grandeur. Traditional titles were abolished and Iranians were given the opportunity of choosing their own last names.[37] In the same year, Rižā Khān proclaimed himself the new Shah, putting an end to the Qājār dynasty in an act which met little resistance in the Majlis. The dramatic changes that preceded his abdication in 1941 included

[37] Adoption of last names had started in 1918–19 on a voluntary basis; see Hekmat, *Sī Khāṭira az ʿAṣr-i Farkhunda-yi Pahlavī*, p. 281.

settlement and disarmament of the tribes; introduction of Western clothing and the unveiling of women; the building of state-owned factories, roads, and Iran's first modern railroad; the modernization and expansion of education; civil codes; and the building of modern armed forces and bureaucracy.[38] Yet there was a negative side too; an autocracy made more efficient than ever by the army and modern transport; the forbidding of strikes and opposition movements and writings; the jailing and killing of opponents; and the financing of modernization through repressive taxes on the poor, whose economic status appears to have declined in the period.

The Qājār period was one of very gradual change, occurring largely under the surface, but creating new formations and groups in both economic and political life. The following Pahlavī period was one of far more rapid change in all spheres, in which many of the demands of the middle class were met, but not the demand for popular self-government and economic betterment for the common people. Under Riżā Shāh Pahlavī two elements among the old ruling classes were very much weakened – the leading ʿulamā and the tribal leaders. The power of the landlords as a class was not broken, however, but became largely merged with that of the army, the court, the bureaucracy and the modern upper bourgeoisie, who formed a new element in Iran's ruling élite. The ineffective policies of Qājār government led ultimately to its downfall in favour of a government which, for all its mixed character, at least introduced long overdue reforms that modernized and strengthened the country.

[38] For a full discussion of reforms undertaken by Riżā Shāh, see A. Banani, *Modernization of Iran, 1921–1941*. For a critique of this period see H. Katouzian, *Political Economy of Modern Iran 1926–1979*.

CHAPTER 6

THE PAHLAVĪ AUTOCRACY: RIẒĀ SHĀH, 1921–41

The close of the First World War found Iran in a state of near anarchy. Despite its proclaimed neutrality, it had been invaded and fought over by the troops of the various belligerents, the eventual outcome being occupation by British and Russian forces. In some provinces the war had caused serious dislocation of economic life. Agricultural production had fallen, the presence of the occupying forces had created acute shortages of basic commodities, while bad harvests over extensive areas of the country, coupled with manipulation of the grain markets by speculators, had resulted in devastating famines. Such scanty prestige as the government of Aḥmad Shāh had possessed in 1914 had been further eroded by 1918. Aḥmād Shāh had succeeded his detested father, Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāh, in 1909 at the age of twelve, but he was hardly more than a cipher.[1] Over vast tracts of the country tribal chieftains or great landlords, such as the Shaukat al-Mulk of Bīrjand and Qāʾin, exercised a seigneurial authority with little regard for the Tehran government.[2] Since 1906, Iran had been a constitutional monarchy, with an elected *Majlis*, or parliament, and a cabinet appointed by the Shah but responsible to the country's chosen representatives, although the language of the original Constitutional Law relating to the subject was ambiguous.[3] The deputies of the Majlis constituted, for the most part, fairly obvious "interest groups": landowners, tribal leaders, the *ʿulamā*, and in the case of the larger urban centres, the *bāzār*. Ministers, Majlis deputies and high-ranking administrators generally belonged to families which had long served the Qājārs as courtiers or officials. Not a few, thanks to the fecundity of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh and some other members of his family, were descendants, if sometimes through rather remote lineages, of the ruling house. Ministers and other prominent politicians were frequently denounced for being "pro-British" or "pro-Russian" by their enemies, or by whichever embassy had failed to command their

[1] Sheikh-ol-Islami, "Aḥmad Shāh Qājār."

[2] For a brief description of the Shaukat al-Mulk, see Skrine, *World War in Iran*, pp. 100–1. Another account of a contemporary "feudal" establishment, near Hamadān, can be found in Forbes-Leith, *Checkmate*. [3] Avery, *Modern Iran*, pp. 374–7.

services, and were regarded as being more or less "in the pocket" of some foreign government. Nevertheless, they were not unskilled, within the modest expectations of an earlier age, at keeping the wheels of government lubricated, while a few were past masters at handling overbearing foreign diplomats, with cool urbanity, from a position of obvious weakness. But for all that, they tended to be lacking in knowledge of the outside world, in constructive managerial skills or in the breadth of vision needed to address Iran's immediate post-war problems. They lived and moved in what, in retrospect, can be seen as an intermediate period between an old order which was passing, and a new one which had yet to emerge, for the Constitutional Revolution had "destroyed the traditional centre of despotic power without producing an adequate substitute."[4]

Whatever dislocation the war had brought to Iran, the foreign occupation had been a genuine educational experience, broadening the horizons of a generation whose outlook, in consequence, differed rather markedly from that of its fathers. News of the happenings in the world beyond the frontiers of Iran, direct, if not always agreeable, contact with foreigners on a far more extensive scale than had been the case before 1914, and unavoidable dealings with the occupying forces, meant that not only the ruling élite, but even quite ordinary Iranians acquired new perspectives and, with them, new aspirations. Without this ferment of ideas circulating in the post-war cities, the innovative measures introduced by Riẓā Shāh would never have been accepted with so little opposition, or have been implemented so extensively.

Central to the Iranian world-view in the first quarter of the 20th century was the conviction that the country was held in an inescapable vice by the rival pressures exerted upon her by Great Britain and Russia. That Iran had not gone the way of other Asian countries – India, for example, or the Khanates of Turkistan – and been formally absorbed into one or other imperial system seemed entirely fortuitous. A few acknowledged that the survival of an independent Iran was directly due to the intense rivalry between the two Powers, which effectively tempered the appetite of both for outright annexation, since neither would acquiesce in a territorial or commercial gain by its rival without adequate compensation. This, at least, gave Iranian politicians room for manoeuvre in playing off the greed or suspicion of one Power against the other; but to play the game well required hostility between the two rivals on a broader stage than just the Iranian plateau. Experience had shown that what was most to be dreaded was Anglo-Russian rapprochement. The Anglo-Russian Entente of 1907 had

[4] Katouzian, "Nationalist Trends in Iran, 1921–1926", p. 533.

clearly demonstrated this, as had Anglo-Russian collaboration during the war, when the negotiated partition of Iran into spheres of influence in the 1907 Agreement actually became a reality. By the Constantinople Agreement of 19 March 1915, Great Britain had extended her sphere of influence into the central "neutral" zone in return for accepting full freedom of action for Russia in the northern zone: formal bifurcation seemed only a matter of time. Iranians with a knowledge of history and contemporary diplomacy had some grounds for apprehension: Great Britain, together with France, was about to preside over the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, while Russia, as the Poles knew only too well, was not averse to the partition of her weaker neighbours.

This latter threat vanished with the Bolshevik Revolution and the subsequent Russian military collapse. It was replaced by an altogether different danger. With the disappearance of the Russian presence in the Middle East, accompanied by an upsurge of revolutionary activity throughout the Caucasian and Transcaspian provinces of the former Tsarist Empire, some of Great Britain's proconsuls began to consider a grandiose scheme for an overall reconstruction of the Middle East: from the Libyan desert to the Zagros, a chain of British protectorates – Egypt, Palestine, Transjordan, Iraq – would form a block of friendly clients guarding the overland route to India. The one weak link was Iran, with her hundreds of miles of frontier with the Soviet Union. But with Russia no longer a factor in the equation, Lord Curzon's dream of establishing a protectorate over Iran, serving British interests while bringing stability and the opportunity for internal reform, suddenly became practical politics. In the words of his biographer: "Always he had dreamt of creating a chain of vassal states stretching from the Mediterranean to the Pamirs and protecting, not the Indian frontiers merely, but our communications with our further Empire."[5] It seemed as if the dream was about to be realized.

It was in this spirit that the Anglo-Iranian Agreement was drawn up in London in 1919. It included provision for the secondment of British officers to Iranian military units, to assist in the modernization of the army, and for the supply of military equipment; the despatch of British advisers for the overhauling of the civil administration, in particular the finances; tariff reform; the development of a modern system of communications; and a British loan to cover at least part of the cost of these measures. All that was needed was the assent of the Iranians. The British minister in Tehran, Sir Percy Cox, was instructed to

[5] Nicolson, *Curzon: The Last Phase*, p. 121. See also Olson, "The Genesis of the Anglo-Persian Agreement of 1919".

obtain this. What was wholly unappreciated in London was that the events of the past two decades had effectively destroyed whatever credibility Great Britain had once enjoyed in Iran. On the contrary, hostility towards her was now being expressed with an intensity reflecting the fervour of the new, xenophobic nationalism, which had hitherto passed unnoticed by British officials in the Middle East, accustomed to the old, easy pre-war world of the Victorian and Edwardian *Pax Britannica*.

Yet Curzon and his advisers may be forgiven for misreading the signs. Ostensibly, the British position in Iran looked strong. The third Majlis, elected in 1914, had been dismissed in 1915 by the advancing Russians, who had always been hostile towards the Constitution of 1906 and preferred to deal directly with the cabinet. Its rump, intensely nationalistic, anti-Russian and pro-German, had formed a provisional government in Qum but had then been forced to retreat, first to Kirmānshāh and then into exile. Thus, throughout the duration of the war, the Russians and the British had dealt on an *ad hoc* basis with ministers appointed by the Shah, while for all practical purposes the Constitution had temporarily lapsed. With the Russian presence in Tehran withdrawn as a result of the revolutionary turmoil in Russia itself, British influence was now at its height with the emergence, in 1918, of a new government, apparently pro-British, liberally subsidized by the British legation, and headed by the shrewd and urbane Vus̱ūq al-Daula. The new prime minister's position was far from enviable. He was neither unintelligent nor lacking in ability but he was, like so many Iranian statesmen during the past hundred years, an individual with colleagues and clients but no institutionalized power-base.[6] He was fiercely criticized as a lackey of the British, but he had few options open to him. In Tehran, the British were the only foreigners who counted, while outside the capital the presence of British military units, together with the South Persia Rifles, was a reminder that threats could, if necessary, be backed by a show of force. Abroad, the Iranian delegation sent to the Versailles Peace Conference to claim a seat and to air grievances was, under pressure from the British, ignominiously denied a hearing.[7] In these circumstances, it must have seemed to Vus̱ūq and his colleagues in the Cabinet that there was no practical alternative to accepting the Agreement.

[6] Nicolson found him impressive nonetheless: "Vossuq-ed-Dowleh . . . was . . . a realist. Upstanding, handsome and reserved, he combined the traditional distinction of his race with that polish which Vevey and Montreux can add to the culture of Iran." Nicolson, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

[7] *Ibid*, pp. 134–136.

However, the Iranian Constitution required all foreign treaties to be ratified by the Majlis. For this to be done, the terms of the treaty had to be made public. It is not impossible that the Vus̱ūq cabinet, for all its apparent willingness to work with the British, fully anticipated that the treaty would be given a hostile reception throughout the country. Certainly, once its contents were made public in August 1919, the outcry was immediate and vociferous. In any case, there could be no ratification without a parliament, so elections for the fourth Majlis were set in motion. The British, for their part, proceeded as if the ratification were a foregone conclusion. Sydney Armitage-Smith and his assistants began to reorganize the finances. General Dickinson and Lieutenant-Colonel William Fraser embarked upon the modernization of the armed forces. Stretches of a proposed Tehran–Baghdad railway were surveyed, and the Iranian Finance Minister was invited to London to negotiate the terms of the British loan. Hardly anyone on the British side seems to have foreseen the public outcry which the terms of the treaty evoked in the press and among the general public, to be followed by formal protests from France, the Soviet Union and the United States, anxious over what appeared to be the imminent closing of the "open door" for trade with Iran. Meanwhile, inside Iran, the protests only grew louder with the passage of time, highlighted by the dramatic discovery of the dead body of Lieutenant-Colonel Fażl-Allāh Khān of the mixed military commission, with a suicide-note stating that, as a patriot, he could no longer condone the subjection of the Iranian armed forces to the interests of British imperialism.

The growing criticism of the government was not, however, solely due to the treaty, but was an expression of broad-based disillusion with the general mismanagement of the country, and of economic and other grievances. The end of the war had brought little or no respite from endemic shortages, lawlessness in the countryside, and large-scale official corruption. By April 1920, Shaikh Muḥammad Khiyābānī and his Democrats were in control of Tabrīz and much of Āẕarbāījān, renamed Āzādistān. A patriot and man of wide learning, Khiyābānī found it impossible to accept the legitimacy of Vus̱ūq's government, apparently bent upon sacrificing the country to the British. The same was true of Mīrzā Kūchik Khān in Gīlān, of whom one historian has written, "A Shi'ite Muslim and an unyielding patriot, Kūchik was an indefatigable fighter and an incorruptible leader whose sole ambition was to rid the country of foreign imperial domination and domestic administrative corruption."[8] Another has

[8] Katouzian, *op. cit.*, p. 534.

described him as "deeply religious and a thorough-going Iranian nationalist'.[9] Mīrzā Kūchik Khān's *Jangalī* (Forest) Movement first surfaced in Gīlān in 1917 and embodied, along with a Robin-Hood-style reputation for robbing the rich and giving to the poor, the nationalist and revolutionary ideals of the constitutional period, vigorously pursued in a rebellion which the central government long proved incapable of suppressing. For a while, the Jangalis lost ground to British and Tsarist Russian units but, by the beginning of 1920, they had again seized the initiative, supported by Red Army troops which had landed in Anzalī to counter British intervention in the Caucasus. That June, Mīrzā Kūchik Khān reluctantly acquiesced in the proclamation of a Soviet Republic of Gīlān.

Amid growing confusion, Vus̱ūq al-Daula resigned on 24 July 1920. The Shah replaced him with the experienced Mushīr al-Daula, who promptly sent the Persian Cossack Brigade to put down the Āzādistān movement in Tabrīz, which it did, although it failed to follow up with a comparable success against the Jangalis. The new prime minister, sensing that the Majlis would never ratify the Anglo-Iranian Agreement, announced that he would not submit the text of the treaty to the Majlis so long as British troops remained on Iranian soil. He probably believed that this would help mollify public opinion, but in any case he may have already decided that the treaty was a dead letter. At the same time, and indicative of current feeling, he responded positively to a Soviet request for a new treaty between the two countries. The terms of this agreement, as they became known, were regarded as highly favourable to Iran, abrogating former Tsarist treaties, concessions and loan repayment claims. Only the Caspian fisheries remained in Russian hands. The contrast with the proposed Anglo-Iranian Treaty could hardly have been more striking. A shuffling of cabinet posts now resulted in the removal of Mushīr al-Daula from the premiership and his replacement by Sardār-i Sipāh Fatḥ-Allāh Khān. The latter then announced that, just as his predecessor had postponed the ratification of the treaty with Great Britain until the departure of all British troops, so ratification of the treaty with the Soviet Union would require the same precondition.[10]

These prevarications, however, were brought to an abrupt halt when, on the night of 21 February 1921, between three and four thousand troops of the Cossack Brigade, led by the forty-two-year-old Colonel Riẓā Khān, marched from Qazvīn to Tehran and executed a bloodless *coup d'état* without encountering any significant resistance. The leader of the conspiracy which had triggered

[9] Avery, *op. cit.*, p. 215. [10] Ardakānī, "Akbar Separdār-e Aʿẓam Fatḥallāh Khan."

off the *coup* was an Anglophile journalist, Sayyid Żiyā al-Dīn Ṭabāṭabā'ī, whom the Shah was now compelled to appoint prime minister.[11] The man of the hour, however, was Colonel Riżā Khān, who was made *Sardār-i Sipāh* (Army Commander). Born in the late 1870s in the village of Alasht in the Savād Kūh of Māzandarān, Riżā Khān joined the Cossack Brigade and rose rapidly through the ranks by reason of his intelligence, competence and determination to succeed. All this he had achieved under the command of Russian officers, from whom he had learnt much without, however, modifying his resentment of foreign tutelage.[12] In 1921, his abilities as a leader were unknown outside military circles, but his personality, devious and inscrutable, was fully formed and bore the mark of ruthless ambition, sustained by a harsh, inflexible will. Thereafter, he rose rapidly from colonel to general, from Minister of War to Commander-in-Chief, rendering himself so indispensable that no government could survive without his support.

Students of Iranian affairs have long pondered on the ease with which the *coup* of 1921 was carried out. From the outset, many Iranians believed that the British were behind it, an instinctive explanation of anything out of the ordinary which happened in the country. During the Pahlavī period, the voicing of such a suspicion was unthinkable, since Riżā Khān's rise to power had acquired the aura of heroic legend. The British, for their part, denied any involvement. Recently, however, the publication of the diaries of Field-Marshall Sir Edmund Ironside has revealed a British connection.[13] As one historian has put it,

> In retrospect it is clear that the coup was intended as the alternative route to the achievement of the spirit of the 1919 Agreement – that is, a political stabilization in Iran which would not pose a threat to the main local regional interests of the British Empire. It is equally clear that Britain was somehow involved in the conception of the coup, although it is improbable that the British Foreign Office itself conceived the idea. The full facts of the matter are not yet known; but it is certain that the commander of the local British forces, General Ironside, was directly involved in the conception and execution of

[11] Sayyid Żiyā al-Dīn Ṭabāṭabā'ī (c. 1889–1969) was the son of a conservative religious leader, and passed his early years in Yazd and Shīrāz. Journalist and politician, he served briefly as prime minister in 1921. He was in exile in Switzerland, 1921–30, and in Palestine, 1931–43. Elected to the Majlis in 1944, he was imprisoned by Qavām in 1946 to appease the Russians. "During the last 20 years of his life, he remained in his village of Saadatabad, near Tehran. Although these years were spent on the sidelines of Iranian politics, he met with the Shah of Iran weekly until the Seyyid's death. He served as an effective and sensitive intermediary and political broker between the Iranian masses and the monarch." James A. Bill, *Concise Encyclopaedia of the Middle East*, p. 331.

[12] It is a curious fact that the only effective military units in Iran down to this time were officered by foreigners: the Persian Cossack Brigade, established by Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh in 1879, by Russians; the Gendarmerie, set up in 1911, by Swedes; and, as a wartime exigency, the South Persian Rifles, raised in 1916, by Britons. See Kazemi, "The Military and Politics in Iran", p. 219.

[13] Wright, *The English Amongst the Persians*, pp. 179–84.

the coup. According to both written and spoken memoirs, there were at first other civilian and military nominees for the leadership of the coup than those who finally led it; many are said to have turned down the suggestion. At any rate, it is certain that Reżā Khān had been hand-picked by Ironside who was impressed by the man's personal and martial qualities.[14]

It is possible that the British had come to recognize by early 1921 that the proposed Anglo-Iranian Treaty was impracticable, and that the negotiations for a new treaty with the Soviet Union showed that the Iranians were still playing one Power off against the other, although now in rather more favourable circumstances. They may have viewed Riżā Khān and his associates as likely to prove more dependable than the old-style politicians. But if it was the British who set Riżā Khān on the road to supreme power, it is certain that he never felt the slightest gratitude towards his surreptitious patrons.

The Ṭabāṭabāʾī government set to work with considerable alacrity. The treaty with the Soviet Union was ratified almost immediately, while the proposed treaty with Great Britain was cancelled on the grounds of its non-ratification. The relics of the incipient British "protectorate" were swiftly swept away. The British military and financial advisers were dismissed, and the South Persia Rifles, raised in 1916 with headquarters in Kirmān, were formally disbanded, the British government declining to transfer the force to Iranian officers or leave behind its equipment and supplies. Meanwhile, protests against those pillars of "informal empire", the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, the Imperial Bank of Iran, and the Indo-European Telegraph Company, became more virulent. Xenophobia served to unite virtually all Iranians behind the new régime, the British being the obvious targets. In April 1921, a Soviet ambassador arrived in Tehran to implement the newly signed treaty, while the last Russian troops were withdrawn from Gīlān. Whatever the former affiliations of Sayyid Żiyā al-Dīn or the nature of the assistance rendered to Riżā Khān at the time of the *coup*, it looked as if the government was leaning very deliberately towards Russia and away from Great Britain.

Sayyid Żiyā al-Dīn had drawn up an ambitious and wide-ranging scheme of reform for the country, but he was determined to precede its implementation with the prosecution of many politicians and officials of the old régime, whom he accused of corruption and misappropriation of government funds. The result was that powerful enemies rallied against him and by May 1921 he had been ousted from the premiership and driven into exile. He was replaced by a younger

[14] Katouzian, *The Political Economy of Modern Iran*, p. 80.

brother of Vuṣūq al-Daula, Qavām al-Salṭana, who was to become one of the ablest Iranian statesmen of the 20th century. Qavām, eager to reduce the rôle of the British and the Russians in the life of the country, immediately began exploratory talks with the United States government and American oil companies, presumably with the approval of Riẓā Khān. Negotiations were begun with the Sinclair Oil Company and in 1922 A.C. Millspaugh was appointed Administrator-General of Finances.

Riẓā Khān's reward for his part in the elimination of Sayyid Żiyā al-Dīn was the post of Minister of War which, combined later with that of Commander-in-Chief, placed him in an unchallengeable position from which to establish a dictatorship. Thus, the civilian politicians unwittingly prepared the ground for their eventual downfall. During the five years between Riẓā Khān's appointment as Minister of War in May 1921 and his coronation as Riẓā Shāh in April 1926, he initiated and carried through a reorganization of the security forces without which the Pahlavī despotism and its concomitant programme of "pseudo-modernization" would scarcely have been possible.[15] Recognized by the general public as the moving force behind the *coup* of 1921 and as the creator of the new army, Riẓā Khān was coming to be regarded as the embodiment of that spirit of national pride and self-assertiveness characteristic of the post-war generation.

From the first, he understood the importance of occupying centre-stage. The central government was still threatened by secessionist or potentially secessionist movements, and by tribal leaders and local communities bent upon reasserting a traditional autonomy. These presented the obvious targets for a man whose ambitions were inextricably linked with the power and prestige of the armed services. Thus, having expanded and improved the fighting quality of the Cossack Brigade, he launched a series of "police-actions" which gave him all the visibility he required and set a distance between himself, the man of action, and the politicians in the capital. First, he eliminated the dissident movements which had surfaced in Tabrīz and Mashhad. Next, he marched on Gīlān to crush the Jangalis, now deprived of Soviet support. Then, he turned his attention to Simko and the rebellious Kurds.

While Riẓā Khān's troops were participating in these vaunted, if rather minor, campaigns, his reorganization of the security forces was proceeding rapidly. The 12,000 men of the Gendarmerie were merged with the 7,000 Cossacks, and the foreign officers of the former were replaced by Iranian officers

[15] *Ibid.* It is central to Katouzian's thesis that Pahlavī rule distorted the modernizing process for Iran.

from the Cossack Brigade, in many instances, old cronies. A new army, 40,000 strong, was recruited, trained and disciplined under his personal supervision, and it began to acquire an *esprit de corps* hitherto rare among Iranian fighting men. Riẓā Khān knew from the start that he had to be assured of regular funds. He acquired these early in the premiership of Qavām by compelling the Ministry of Finance to transfer revenues from the public domain to the Ministry of War, to which was added income from indirect taxation, an arrangement which continued until Millspaugh completed his reorganization of the state finances. With regular pay, improved equipment, and rising morale, the army gave him its unqualified loyalty. No less important, Riẓā Khān was surrounding himself with a core of devoted officers whom he could rely upon to carry out his orders and who, in return, were offered ample scope for ambition and self-advancement.

Although it was improbable that the Iranian army would be engaged in hostilities with any external foes in the foreseeable future, campaigns on Iranian soil continued to provide experience in the field and to boost morale. In 1922, the army was employed in Āẕarbāījān and Fārs; in 1923, in Kirmānshāh; in 1924, in Balūchistān and Luristān; and in 1925, in Māzandarān and Khurāsān.[16] Less strenuous but more widely publicized than any of these campaigns was the occupation of Khūzistān in 1924, and the overthrow of its ruler, Shaikh Khazʿal of Muḥammara. Shaikh Khazʿal seems to have regarded himself as virtually independent, secure in the favour of the British, to whom he had been extremely useful in the recent war. He undoubtedly suffered from *folie de grandeur*, which manifested itself principally in reluctance to pay taxes to the central government, reflecting both his contempt for the latter and the physical distance of Muḥammara from Tehran. He had allegedly discussed secession with disgruntled Lur and Bakhtiyārī tribal leaders and with agents from Iraq. Tehran threatened him from time to time, but the Shaikh seemed unassailable. His British friends warned the Iranian government not to disturb the *status quo*, and even moved warships up the Gulf.

Here was a situation which provided Riẓā Khān with a splendid opportunity to act in a manner which could not fail to win him the approbation of most Iranians, to whom the Shaikh, an Arab, appeared nothing more than a pawn of the British. In the autumn of 1924, therefore, army units were despatched to the south-west, to be joined by Riẓā Khān in person shortly afterwards. Whatever resistance had been anticipated on the part of the Shaikh failed to materialize, and the British made no move to assist their protégé. Riẓā Khān made a

[16] For a fairly full, and favourable, account of Riẓā Shāh's early campaigns, see Arfa, *Under Five Shahs*.

triumphant entry into Muḥammara in November before returning to a hero's welcome in the capital. By this time, however, important changes had taken place in Tehran. Over a year earlier, on 28 October 1923, Aḥmad Shāh had appointed Riżā Khān Prime Minister, while permitting him to retain the post of Minister of War. A few days later, the Shah left for Europe, never to return. Riżā Khān was now *de facto* ruler of the country, but he continued to tread cautiously, working within the cabinet and parliamentary system established by law. This was not always easy. The closing session of the fourth Majlis brought into the open a serious conflict of purpose between the Prime Minister and the more conservative deputies. Riżā Khān wanted to have a bill passed to establish mandatory national service for two years. This proposal was strongly opposed by the landlords, since such a measure would reduce their work force, and weaken the traditional dependency of cultivators in landlord-owned villages towards their "*āghā*s". The *ʿulamā* objected equally strongly, fearing a measure which would expose the entire male population to a way of life and an ethos essentially foreign, Western and secular.

This confrontation led Riżā Khān to turn to new allies in the opening session of the fifth Majlis, to the Revival Party (*Ḥizb-i Tajaddud*), from which he would recruit two future cabinet ministers, ʿAli Akbar Dāvar and ʿAbd al-Ḥusain Tīmūrtāsh, and to the Socialist Party (*Ḥizb-i Sōsiālīst*). This fifth Majlis, which assembled in January 1923, initiated a series of measures which set the stage for the subsequent centralizing programmes of the two Pahlavī rulers. The bill for compulsory military service was passed. A money bill granted tax revenues from tea and sugar as well as an income tax for the construction of a projected Trans-Iranian railway. Weights and measures were made uniform throughout the country. The pre-Islamic calendar was resuscitated. Birth certificates were introduced and everyone was required to adopt a European-style family name, Riżā Khān choosing that of Pahlavī, redolent of the glories of ancient, pre-Islamic Iran. Qājār titles of nobility were abolished. And the prime minister became in name what he had long been in fact: Commander-in-Chief.

During the early part of 1924, an apparently spontaneous movement arose to declare Iran a republic. The atmosphere was one of change and promise, and many patriots, particularly among the young, were stirred by the sense of direction which Riżā Khān's leadership had given the country. The rule of the Qājār dynasty was thoroughly discredited, while across the border, Turkey had recently proclaimed a republic. Why, a vocal minority demanded, should not Iran follow suit? But Turkey's venture into republicanism was soon followed by the introduction of secularizing measures which disturbed many observers in

Iran, especially among the ᶜulamā, for whom republicanism thereafter became identified with Ataturk's anti-Islamic programme. Riżā Khān may have at first welcomed attacks upon the Qājār dynasty but he seems to have been quick to sense the potential divisiveness of the issue. In April he made plain his opposition to public debate on the subject: he had decided that he did not want to follow Ataturk's path. At the same time, he did not wish to continue as prime minister of an absentee Shah, who could, at least in theory, return at any time and dismiss him. With characteristic deviousness, he offered his resignation to both the Majlis and the army. Consternation followed the news of his intended withdrawal from public life. Reluctantly, as it seemed, he bowed to the call of duty, and returned to take up the premiership again, stronger now than ever before.[17]

It is likely that he was already intent upon obtaining the throne. For a while, the idea of a life presidency may have appealed to him, but the opposition of the ᶜulamā to republicanism probably settled that issue. The traditional aura attached to the *persona* of the Shāhanshāh, although much dimmed in recent times, could again become a potent weapon in the armoury of an energetic leader. Moreover, his greed to enrich himself and a large family could be more easily satisfied as a hereditary monarch than a First Citizen.

In the opening weeks of 1925, Riżā Khān's personal prestige, further enhanced by his recent campaigning in Khūzistān, soared higher still. In February, the Majlis further increased his authority, and when, later in the year, rumours began to circulate that the Shah intended to return from Europe, a well-orchestrated campaign of abuse and vituperation was launched against the royal family. On 31 October 1925, the Majlis voted (80 in favour, 5 against, with 30 abstentions) to depose the Qājār dynasty and to reconvene as a Constituent Assembly. In the interim, Riżā Khān was to act as Head of State. Finally, on 12 December 1925, the Majlis, sitting as a Constituent Assembly, voted almost unanimously to invest Riżā Khān and his heirs with the crown. Descendants of the old dynasty were to be specifically excluded from the succession or from any future regency council. On 15 December, Riżā Shāh, as he was henceforth to be known, took the oath of allegiance to uphold the Fundamental Laws of the Constitution, to support the Shīᶜī faith, and to preserve the independence and territorial integrity of the country. On the following day, he formally received the heads of missions accredited to the government, and on the 19th appointed

[17] The "reluctant saviour" motif is a familiar one in the history of despotism. Nādir Shāh had gone through similar motions. In Russian history, the examples of Ivan the Terrible and Boris Godunov are well known.

his first prime minister, Muḥammad ʿAlī Furūghī: the rule of the Pahlavī dynasty had begun.[18]

In April 1926, the British author, Vita Sackville-West, visiting Tehran, found herself invited to Riżā Shāh's coronation. She wrote: "In appearance Reza was an alarming man, six feet three in height, with a sullen manner, a huge nose, grizzled hair and a brutal jowl; he looked, in fact, what he was, a Cossack trooper; but there was no denying that he had a kingly presence. Looking back, it seemed that he had risen in an amazingly short time from obscurity to his present position. . . . nor had he any rival in the the lax limp nation he had mastered."[19] A former German envoy, remembering the Shah years later, recalled the unfathomable eyes and the head of a bird of prey. Strength, energy, brutality, cunning and malice were the words which immediately sprang to mind.[20] Yet if the man himself inspired fear and respect rather than affection, there existed a widespread feeling that under him the country was at last beginning to move forward. In a decade marked by the rise of such dictators as Ataturk, Mussolini, Primo de Rivera, Piłsudski and Horthy, the climb of Riżā Shāh to supreme power seemed to reflect a common enough pattern in the rest of the world. He was also, beyond any doubt, the personification of certain distinct aspects of the "new" Iran, brash, insensitive and impatient for results. Even without him, Iran would surely have experienced many changes in the two decades between the World Wars, but without such a taskmaster the pace would have been slower and the outcome rather different.

Riżā Shāh's achievement in the years between 1925 and 1941 was the substantial fulfilment of goals already set during his years as Minister of War and prime minister: the creation of a modern army and police force to maintain internal security; the elimination of all opposition to his will; a modern system of communications; industrial development to reduce dependence upon foreign suppliers; and as far as possible, the elimination of outside interference in the country's internal affairs. Bent upon presenting a modern image of a quintessentially traditional society, intolerant of opposition or dissent, it was inevitable that he would view Iran's still extensive tribal population with enmity. Riżā Shāh's treatment of the tribes was both vindictive and unnecessary, but their violent pacification, besides further testing the mettle of his troops,

[18] Of the new order, Harold Nicolson caustically wrote: "This bullet-headed man, with the voice of an asthmatic child, now controls the destinies of Iran. . . . Is it for good or for bad? . . . What has she gained? There is no liberty in Persia today – there is fear, corruption, dishonesty and disease." Nicolson, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

[19] Sackville-West, *Passenger to Teheran*, pp. 103–4.

[20] von Blücher, *Zeitenwende in Iran*, pp. 171 and 328, quoted in Upton, *The History of Modern Iran*, pp. 150–1.

affirmed both his absolute mastery of all his subjects, and his commitment to modernity. The major tribes suffered most, although they regained some ground in the years following his removal, but with the independent spirit of their leaders broken and their followers defeated by superior weapons and tactics, tribal Iran ceased to have much political significance. At the same time, the loss of livestock and neglect of the potential for improved animal husbandry, in a country so suited to pastoralism, which resulted from Riżā Shāh's persecution of the tribes, were scarcely less costly in economic terms than they were in terms of human suffering. There is, however, no reason to suppose that any such considerations counted for much in Riżā Shāh's calculations.

At first, he moved cautiously. The larger tribes were well-armed with weapons acquired from the various European or European-officered units which had been operating in Iran during the First World War. Moreover, he knew that it would take time to train regular units to face tough, mobile and enterprising opponents. Initially, therefore, he chose to play off one tribe against another, but once he felt sufficiently confident of his own troops, he subjected the tribal territories, one by one, to taxation and conscription, undertaken with characteristic brutality and corruption. Unaccustomed to such levies, the tribes found the government's fiscal demands a crushing burden, while the conscription of their young men seriously weakened their manpower, thereby reducing their ability to oppose further government encroachments. Hence, they resisted, only to be savagely punished by army units which then remained to implement the policy of forcible settlement, which was enforced with predictable incompetence and violence. For the nomads, sedentarization invariably entailed loss of livestock, a reduction in the food-supply and standard of living, disease, higher mortality, loss of freedom, and exploitation by both the military and local government officials. For some tribes, only the abdication of Riżā Shāh in 1941 saved them from extinction.

While the outlines of Riżā Shāh's policies towards the tribes are well-known, the fate of two of the most important, the Bakhtiyārī and the Qashqāʾī, deserve special mention. In the case of the former, the Shah moved warily, his intentions concealed by the confidence which he seemed to display towards the leading Bakhtiyārī Khān, Sardār Asʿad, whom he treated as a trusted collaborator, appointing him first, Minister of Posts and Telegraphs, and afterwards, Minister of War. All the time, however, he was plotting the downfall of the tribe. He knew that the Bakhtiyārīs had long been a formidable element in national politics: he was familiar with the prominent rôle played during the constitutional period and with the rumours of a possible Bakhtiyārī seizure of

the throne in 1912. As early as June 1922, what appears to have been a contrived clash between some Bakhtiyārīs and government troops was made the pretext for levying a heavy indemnity upon the tribe. In 1923, the Bakhtiyārī khans were forbidden to maintain armed retainers. In 1928, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was ordered to desist from leasing lands direct from the Bakhtiyārīs, but to apply through the governor of Khūzistān. In 1929, the year of the great uprising of the tribes of Fārs, a revolt among the Bakhtiyārīs was triggered by the highhandedness of government agents. This led to the execution of three khans. In 1933, the offices of *īlkhānī* and *īlbegī* were abolished. In 1934, three khans were imprisoned and presumably executed, Sardār Asʿad dying under mysterious circumstances not long after his arrest. Finally, in 1936, the Bakhtiyārī country was divided into two administrative units, one under the jurisdiction of the governor of Khūzistān, and the other under that of the governor of Iṣfahān. In this way, slowly but inexorably, the most prominent and strategically-placed of all the tribes was "pacified".[21]

The Qashqāʾīs put up a more determined resistance, giving the government considerable trouble. Accordingly, they suffered even more than the Bakhtiyārīs. It began early in the reign when the Qashqāʾī īlkhān, Ṣaulat al-Daula, and his eldest son, Naṣīr Khān, were spirited away to Tehran, at first in the guise of Majlis deputies (1926), but later as virtual prisoners. With the leaders out of the way, the policy of disarming the Qashqāʾīs could begin, undertaken with the ferocity of a dragonnade. The fiscal exactions, the relentless conscription and the tyrannical conduct of those who carried out the government's policies provoked a desperate resistance. In the spring of 1929, the Qashqāʾīs rebelled *en masse*, soon to be joined by the equally battered and bitter Boir Aḥmadīs, Mamassanīs and Khamsas, although for the time being the Bakhtiyārīs remained quiet. The demands of all the tribes were more or less identical: an end to disarming and conscription, a reduction of taxation, the restoration of their former autonomy and the reinstatement of their khans.

During the first weeks of the uprising, the government was caught unprepared. The Qashqāʾīs quickly captured a number of gendarmerie posts, penetrated the environs of Shīrāz to the point of occupying the airport, and cut communications on the Shīrāz–Bushire and Shīrāz–Ābāda roads. As the revolt spread, the Mamassanīs and Boir Aḥmadīs went into action, and there were some scattered risings in the Bakhtiyārī country. In Tehran, there was fear that the unrest would spread to the cities, where the ʿulamā were thought to have

[21] Garthwaite, *Khans and Shahs*, pp. 138–9.

been alienated by various government-sponsored innovations. Iṣfahān, in particular, was viewed as a potential trouble-spot. Characteristically, Riżā Shāh played for time. Until the military situation improved, a degree of compromise was shown by the government, since it was appreciated that some insurgents would settle for promises of a general amnesty and redress of grievances. Accordingly, Sardār Asʿad was sent to the Bakhtiyārīs, and Ṣaulat al-Daula and Naṣīr Khān to Shīrāz to mediate. Meanwhile, the military situation gradually shifted in favour of the government. In the recent past, the tribesmen, mobile, resourceful and thoroughly familiar with the terrain, had proved formidable foes to inadequately trained and undisciplined government forces. But Riżā Shāh's reforms were now beginning to prove their worth, demonstrated in the army's superior fire-power and the ability of local commanders, after the confusion of the first few weeks of the revolt, to take the initiative. The construction of a network of strategic roads rendered tribal fastnesses no longer impregnable, while automatic weapons, armoured cars and observation-planes tilted the balance against traditional modes of tribal warfare.

By the end of August 1929, the Qashqāʾī revolt was over. During the winter months the army pursued and punished the Khamsas and the Bahārlūs; in the following year, it was the turn of the Mamassanīs and the Boir Aḥmadīs. Finally, in 1932, the Qashqāʾīs, exasperated by the government's unwillingness to live up to the 1929 agreements, revolted again, but the army was ready now, and punishment was swift and merciless. Little will to resist remained among the tribes. "During the last nine years of the reign", writes the historian of the Qashqāʾīs, "Reżā Shāh had most of the tribal leaders of Persia executed or exiled."[22]

The miseries inflicted upon the tribes by Riżā Shāh have often been overlooked in the general approbation of his reforms by western writers. What, in reality, enforced settlement involved is vividly conveyed in the following passage written by one who was well-acquainted with the Qashqāʾīs in the period immediately following their ordeal under Riżā Shāh.

Qashqai intransigence led to the adoption against them of increasingly severe measures and to a speeding up of the policy of enforced settlement. . . . the means by which it was achieved were barbarous, ruthless, and short-sighted, and . . . made little provision for the momentous change-over from a pastoral to an agricultural economy. . . . Settlement areas were selected with little or no regard for their salubrity, and those who formerly had avoided the malaria of the low-lying regions by moving to the hills, fell victims to its

[22] Oberling, *The Qashqāʾi Nomads of Fars*, p. 165. For the above summary of the Qashqāʾī under Riżā Shāh, see *ibid*, pp. 155–65.

insidious undermining of their health, with a consequent steep rise in their infant mortality. Refuse . . . rotted in the villages, polluting the springs and spreading typhoid and dysentery; while trachoma of the eyes played havoc with their sight . . . pneumonia, tuberculosis and other pulmonary infections flourished, snatching their heavy toll of life. . . . There is no doubt that Reza Shah's instructions were often exceeded by his depraved officials, whose principle aim, with very few exceptions, was to exploit the situation to their own financial gain and sadistic satisfaction.[23]

There is hardly a blacker page in the history of Pahlavī Iran than the persecution to which the tribal population was subjected by Riẓa Shāh's myrmidons. More positive aspects of the period were the construction of roads, railway-lines and port facilities, the beginnings of industrialization, and the introduction of European-style legal and educational systems. These developments, together with the changes which went with them, affected virtually all segments of society: most conspicuously, the emerging Western-educated élite, the traditionally-educated ʿulamā, women and the minorities.

Because Iran lacked capitalists prepared to accept the high risks of "development" investment, it was clear that, as in Turkey, the state would be required to take the lead in creating a modern infrastructure. In any case, *étatisme* naturally appealed to a man of Riẓā Shāh's temperament: it was to be a cardinal principle of government throughout the entire Pahlavī period that much of the impetus for development, together with control of key organizations and industries, should be in the hands of the state. The transport system inevitably attracted immediate attention. There were virtually no metalled roads at the time of Riẓā Shāh's rise to power, the lack of which impeded his plans for improving internal security, since it was impossible to move troops about the country speedily. A high priority of the new régime, therefore, was a programme of road-building, in which foreign companies were invited to assist in surveying and constructing highways to link major cities and to reach the hitherto inaccessible hinterlands. Once these were built, motor-transport soon established itself as the main form of communication across the country. The long-distance lorry became ubiquitous on even the most remote byways, with the picturesque caravanserai of a former age giving way to the bus-station and goods-depot.

Iran almost missed the railway age, for during the era of European-financed railway construction, Iran slumbered under the rule of the Qājārs, neither Russia nor Great Britain being prepared to tolerate the other using railway-building as a means to penetrate the country. Riẓā Shāh, however, was free to plan a railway-system without reference to the interests of either Power, although both

[23] Garrod, "The Qashqai Tribe of Fars", pp. 298–9.

benefitted from this development, and during the Second World War the Trans-Iranian railway provided a vital lifeline to Russia for Allied war-materials. Riżā Shāh pushed ahead with this spectacular feat of engineering, the line which linked the Persian Gulf to Tehran, later to be extended from the capital to Tabrīz, Mashhad and the Caspian coast. Its construction was approved by the Majlis in early 1926, and it was completed by 1938. Numerous foreign companies supplied technology, personnel and materials, but while the general public was heavily taxed to pay for it, no foreign loans had to be negotiated. Despite the subsequent criticism levelled against the project, it enormously facilitated the importation of heavy manufactured goods as well as the export of agricultural produce, while its construction and maintenance brought into being an indigenous labour-force possessing new and valuable skills.

By the end of Riżā Shāh's reign, private industrial undertakings such as sugar-refineries and textile-mills were to be found in a number of major urban centres, but the most characteristic forms of industrialization were the state monopolies, such as tobacco factories, cement works and power plants. Infrastructure industries had only a very limited appeal for the private sector. The aim of the new class of entrepreneurs was to reap quick, high and safe profits, without much regard for augmenting sales by price-cutting or competition. They preferred non-competitive monopolies which they could exploit to the maximum. Labour conditions were generally bad and there was little or no concern to replace plant or to plough back profits with a view to long-term capital investment. Such attitudes remained conspicuously characteristic.

The growth of a skilled and semi-skilled labour-force concentrated in a few urban centres posed new problems for a government which thought of its role largely in terms of licences, controls, and regulatory legislation, administered by an ever-expanding army of bureaucrats intent upon extending government intervention on any pretext as a means to enhancing their own importance. Riżā Shāh's rule was a régime of inspectors and regulators quite as much as it was a régime of policemen and informers. The amelioration of working conditions, and welfare issues in general, lay for the most part outside its range of concerns. Within the administrative hierarchy, the extent of corruption was believed to be considerable and it was generally assumed that this extended to the highest levels.

Apart from the unprecedented expansion of governmental activity in the Riżā Shāh period, the growth of the civil service and of those directly employed by government was due to two further developments. Partly in order to appease foreign governments which demanded that their citizens not be subjected to

traditional Iranian forms of justice, partly to weaken the power of the ᶜulamā and thereby to reinforce the secularizing goals of the régime, and partly because it would be evidence of Iran's progress towards modernity, Riżā Shāh determined to introduce a European-style legal system to replace the *Sharīᶜa* courts. In consequence, commercial and criminal codes were promulgated in 1925 and a civil code in 1926, for which the inspiration was derived selectively from France, Belgium, Switzerland and Italy. A Ministry of Justice was created in 1927 and ᶜAlī Akbar Dāvar, a graduate of the University of Geneva and one of the Shah's ablest and most intelligent modernizers, began the task of shaping a lay judiciary. With the founding of a faculty of law at the new University of Tehran, French and Italian professors were engaged to provide legal training. Even so, many members of the legal profession preferred to receive their education in Europe.

Riżā Shāh's regime also established the framework of a European-style educational system, although it long remained under-funded, so that education continued to be, for the most part, the privilege of the wealthy and of the new middle and professional classes. Nevertheless, there were more literate Iranians in 1941 than in 1921, while very many were sufficiently educated to respond to the growing demands and opportunities of a rapidly changing society. Most important of all, in founding the University of Tehran in 1935, Riżā Shāh provided the means for the growth of an indigenously educated Westernized élite and of an increasingly articulate intelligentsia, despite the fact that an education abroad remained the goal of almost all Iranians who could afford it.

Between 1921 and 1941, the social structure of Iran changed dramatically, with new occupations, new jobs and the migration of workers to new locations eroding long-established patterns of living. Most striking of all was the phenomenon of rapid urbanization, as the surplus population of the villages began to move to the cities, responding to rumours of opportunities for an improved way of life. Tehran, in particular, saw the beginnings of that phenomenal growth which became virtually unmanageable by the 1970s. These changes were accompanied by a tremendous amount of familial and personal dislocation and tension, but for the newly emerging élites the material gains were substantial. The rich were undoubtedly getting richer, for under the protective mantle of the Shah, who grew continually more autocratic and aloof, the pampered officer corps, the bureaucracy and the *nouveau riche* entrepreneurial classes flourished exceedingly, being the main beneficiaries of Pahlavī rule.

Notwithstanding the corruption and brutality of his officials and soldiers, Riżā Shāh was by no means universally unpopular, despite unvoiced resentment

in some quarters. Indeed, his strident chauvinism appealed to the mood of quickening national self-assertion. There was a widespread feeling that the days when Iran had been the pawn of the European Powers were over, and that their ruler's forcefulness was compelling foreigners to show a new respect for a hitherto disregarded or despised country, which nevertheless retained a profound awareness of the splendours of its ancient past. That Riżā Shāh's attitude to that heritage was inconsistent and contradictory seems to have provoked little comment. On the one hand, his insistence in making Iran as similar as possible to his preconceptions of the states of Western Europe and his rejection of indigenous tradition (exemplified by his substitution of numbered *ustāns* for the historic provinces and by his advocacy of Western dress) were indicative of his contempt for the inherited past. On the other hand, there was the deliberate (and often incongruous) identification of the new Pahlavī Iran with the glories of the pre-Islamic Iranian empires, the short-lived move to purge the Persian language of foreign (i.e., Arabic) accretions, the introduction of an anachronistic calendar, and the re-writing of history textbooks with a view to establishing an unbroken continuum in the national experience.

In dismissing the recent past, the Shah and his advisors were intent upon integrating an ancient pre-Islamic heritage with a future based upon a European model, and the generation which came of age in his time seemed to acquiesce in the paradox. Old-style cultural and ethnic nationalism combined with a thirst for whatever was new and foreign. Riżā Shāh despised intellectuals, but he instinctively understood that the Western-educated products of foreign schools and colleges, and the graduates of his new University of Tehran, were the only people upon whom he could rely to carry out his modernizing programmes. As one scholar reflected, not long after his removal from the scene,

> Riżā Shāh, . . . realized that he could only maintain himself in power if he conformed with the desire of the intellectuals for Westernization. . . . Consequently, Riżā Shāh, although he had in fact established a dictatorship, intentionally preserved the outward forms of constitutional government and embarked upon a programme of Westernization and modernization. . . . By thus conforming to the temper of a potentially influential section of the population of the country Riżā Shāh was able to persuade the people to furnish him with such force as was necessary to impose his will.[24]

In his dealings with the ʿulamā, Riżā Shāh, contrary to what is often asserted, was quite circumspect, and there is no evidence that he ever considered launching an assault upon Islam such as Ataturk mounted in Turkey. He

[24] Lambton, "Persia", pp. 12–13.

preferred to ignore rather than confront the ʿulamā. On one key issue, whether the new Iran should become a republic, it is true that he quickly succumbed to clerical pressure, but in so doing he also served his own and his family's material interests. Yet the general direction of his reforms was hardly less fraught with danger for the ʿulamā than was outright government hostility in neighbouring Turkey. In terms of their traditional status, the ʿulamā were profoundly affected by the reduction in their judicial, educational and philanthropic functions, the inevitable consequence of the introduction of European-type legal and educational systems, and of government supervision of *auqāf*. No less significant, the state implicitly declared its secular character by projecting typically Western material goals; by interference in the people's daily lives with regard to street attire, the unveiling of women and female education; by the introduction of such innovations as European-style family names and a non-Islamic calendar; and by pronouncements and legislation which made it clear that women and members of religious minorities were now to be regarded as full citizens of the state on an equal footing with Muslim males. Finally, the régime brooked no opposition, jailing critics and even suspected opponents. Members of the ʿulamā, like everyone else, could be exiled, imprisoned, die in jail in unexplained circumstances, or simply disappear. There was no court of appeal, no means of redress.

The response of the ʿulamā to this situation was not, and could not be, uniform or unequivocal. During the reign of Riżā Shāh, as during the reign of his son, there were always quietists, who did not believe in involving themselves in politics, as well as those who endeavoured to come to terms with the realities of the new régime and who tried, in the tumultuous changes taking place around them, to find some rationale or justification within the framework of Islamic doctrine and epistemology. Sayyid Abuʾl-Qāsim Kāshānī (c. 1882–1962), the prominent activist *āyatullāh* of the early 1950s, seems to have exemplified the ambiguous and sometimes anomalous rôle forced upon individual clerics by the conflicting aims and policies of the Riżā Shāh régime. Arriving in Tehran from British-occupied Iraq at the time of the 1921 *coup d'état* and filled with hatred for the British and their rôle in Middle Eastern politics, it was natural for him to be drawn towards Riżā Khān the nationalist and champion of Iran's sovereign independence. Once elected to the Constituent Assembly, presumably with the support or approval of Riżā Khān, he took an active part in the debates which were to lead to the petition for Riżā Khān to accept the crown. Later, however, he seems to have developed doubts about the direction in which the régime was heading and opposed some of Riżā Shāh's policies. He is said to have distrusted Tīmūrtāsh, for a time the Shah's close confidant and Minister of Court, and to

have objected to the 1933 agreement with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. Nevertheless, he managed to avoid provoking the Shah. Probably, along with other members of the ᶜulamā, he was caught in a dilemma. Some aspects of Riżā Shāh's rule must have been abhorrent to him, such as the unmistakably secular character of the government. On the other hand, Riżā Shāh's anti-foreign, especially anti-British, moves enjoyed his unqualified support.[25]

Some other members of the ᶜulamā were more outspokenly critical, but paid a high price for their temerity. Thus, Abuʾl-Ḥasan Ṭālaqānī (d. 1932), the father of the prominent revolutionary leader, Āyatullāh Maḥmūd Ṭālaqānī (d. 1979), vigorously protested against various government measures, such as the forcible unveiling of women, for which he was repeatedly imprisoned or exiled to remote parts of the country.[26] Of all Riżā Shāh's clerical opponents, however, the most influential and important was Sayyid Ḥasan Mudarris (d. 1937). An eloquent nationalist, who espoused pan-Islamic causes, he was first and foremost the embodiment of the old liberal-clerical alliance of the constitutional period. As a charismatic politician and a gifted orator, he came to dominate the fourth Majlis of 1921. Recognizing from the outset the personal ambition of Riżā Khān, fuelled by the divisions and drift in cabinet and parliament, he sought to alert his colleagues to their danger. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the debate on the future of the monarchy on 31 October 1925, he was one of the five deputies who opposed the majority vote. Thereafter, he stood forth as a bitter and fearless critic of the new régime. In 1929, he was arrested and imprisoned in the remote fort of Khwāf, where he was murdered eight years later.

In contrast to the ᶜulamā, whose prestige and authority in the new Iran were visibly reduced, the religious minorities who, as *ẕimmī*s living under the protection of the Sharīᶜa, had known both institutionalized discrimination and sporadic mob violence during the Qājār period, now enjoyed enhanced security and increased opportunities for economic advancement, the result of moves taken by Riżā Shāh's government to place all citizens on an equal footing. This was not due to any liberal or egalitarian sentiments on the part of the Shah, but rather to a desire to place all Iranians on one level *vis-à-vis* the omnipotent state. The result, however, was the amelioration of the lot of Armenian Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians, to whom a broad range of new occupations and professions became available. Towards Iran's ethnic minorities, however, whether Arabs, Balūchīs, Kurds, Türkmens or Turkī-speakers, he displayed a

[25] Richard, "Ayatollah Kashani", pp. 101–24. [26] Algar, "Abuʾl-Ḥasan Ṭālaqānī".

consistent hostility. This reflected both his suspicion of ethnic and cultural pluralism, which he viewed as a threat to the unitary state, and his dread of dissident, potentially secessionist movements. Such groups were therefore exposed to ruthless coercion to force them to enter the mainstream of Iranian society, accompanied by systematic attacks upon their cultural identities. Riẓā Shāh was also highly suspicious of foreign missionary organizations, regarding mission schools and hospitals as focal points of sinister foreign influence and possible espionage. Both were brought increasingly under the scrutiny and control of the central government.

Riẓā Shāh's dream of a self-reliant, self-sustaining Iran called for the harnessing of all available talent and energy to the service of the state. Thus, in deliberately drawing both the religious minorities and women into the mainstream of national life, he was emulating already developed countries and accentuating the image of the new Iran as a nation now wholly committed to the ideal of modernity. He was also expanding the human potential upon which the fulfilment of his dream ultimately depended. Riẓā Shāh's reign will doubtless be remembered for the very considerable advances made by Iranian women in public life, although inevitably these were most apparent among women of the upper and middle classes. Women experienced an easing of the constraints imposed upon them by traditional norms and values. They now had opportunities for employment in new occupations, such as nursing, teaching and in the factories. The official line was that Iranian women must prepare themselves to meet the expectations of the new Pahlavī order. In their education, dress and social activities they were urged to emulate their Western sisters, and in 1936, the veil was officially outlawed. However, some of these innovations were little more than cosmetic. An aggressively masculine society, preoccupied with the notion of *machismo* and family honour, was not going to change its attitudes towards its womenfolk overnight. In reality, Riẓā Shāh's celebrated civil code, in so far as it concerned women, still reflected traditional Islamic assumptions regarding sex-rôles and relations between the sexes, doing little to alleviate the age-old juridical subjugation of women to men.

All this, however, should not obscure the fact that the reign of Riẓā Shāh witnessed in the improved status of women one of the most significant developments in the history of modern Iran. The introduction of a European-style system of education meant female education as well as male. From the outset, women were admitted on equal terms with men to the University of Tehran. A new generation of educated women was thereby brought into being which was to play an increasingly important rôle in the country's economic and cultural

life. In course of time, scores of women's organizations would proliferate, women would begin to acquire some degree of visibility in public life, and society would come to accept, however grudgingly, the presence of women in the labour market.

Unlike Ataturk, Riżā Shāh had no first-hand knowledge of any European country and, prior to his enforced exile, the only occasions on which he had left Iran were a brief visit to Iraq and a formal state visit to Turkey.[27] Yet from his earliest years in the military he must have been acutely aware of the rôle which foreigners had played in shaping the destiny of his country. Born around 1878 and growing up in the north, he would have known about the struggle for the constitution, subsequent Russian intervention and the notorious Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907. He had learnt his soldiering under Russian officers, and had lived through the invasion and occupation of his country during the First World War. However intent Riżā Shāh might be upon the reorganization and modernization of Iran, he could not ignore the international dimension. Indeed, it has been argued that the driving force behind his modernization programme was his recognition of the fact that until Iran came to resemble a European nation-state, it would not be treated like one, and would continue to suffer the humiliation of being a pawn of the two Powers which had more or less controlled its affairs for the past hundred years. As between the two Powers, the Soviet Union in the 1920s must have appeared the less threatening. The turmoil inside Russia since the revolution seemed likely to continue for some time and possibly to lead to the fragmentation of the former Russian Empire. It is unlikely that either Riżā Shāh or his advisers anticipated the Soviet Union's tremendous resilience and capacity for recovery. He seems initially to have felt little apprehension of the new régime. Moreover, the publication by the Soviet government of secret treaties and agreements negotiated by the former Tsarist government, and its unilateral abrogation of the hated Capitulations were warmly welcomed in Iran as evidence of a new departure in Russo-Iranian relations, most favourably to be compared in Tehran with Great Britain's attitude. In the light of the problems facing the new Soviet government, Riżā Shāh might have viewed their intervention in Gīlān (see p. 209 above) as being motivated, as much as anything, by a need to counter the threat from Denikin's White Russians in the Caucasus and from "Dunsterforce" at Anzalī.[28] Thus, he seems to have seen no contradiction in agreeing to the Soviet-Iranian Friendship

[27] Arfa, *op. cit.*, pp. 243–53.
[28] For this confused period, see Dunsterville, *The Adventures of Dunsterforce*; Kazemzadeh, *The Struggle for Transcaucasia*; and Arslanian, "Dunsterville's Adventure".

Treaty of 1921, while at the same time eliminating their protégé in Gīlān, Mīrzā Kūchik Khān.

But it is possible that, during the early years, Riżā Shāh regarded Great Britain as little less immobilized than the Soviet Union. The post-war world had not proved easy for the victors. For the British, the situation in India, as in Egypt, was highly inflammable. Iraq was proving a continuous drain upon limited money and manpower. Çannakale and the rise of a Turkish republic brought to an end the long-standing tradition of British intervention in the affairs of the former Ottoman Empire. British involvement with the Arab world was increasing, but the Palestine Mandate was clearly a Pandora's Box. What must have been viewed in Tehran as British attempts to destabilize the Soviet Union's Muslim underbelly in Baku and Transcaspia had proved a fiasco. Riżā Shāh, anticipating no hostile moves from the British in the the near future, must have sensed that the time was most opportune for the emancipation of Iran from the tutelage of its erstwhile masters. Nor would he have failed to appreciate that a posture of opposition towards both the Russians and the British, but especially towards the British, would win him the respect, even of those who did not otherwise support him. Under the Qājārs, Iranians had been forced to live with the humiliation of constant pressure and sporadic threats from the representatives of the two Powers. A xenophobic foreign policy, Riżā Shāh knew, would command almost universal support. Yet his options were very limited. British and Russian interference in Iranian affairs in the past had been due to their physical proximity and to strategic interests which remained constant despite other changes. Soviet border-units remained within striking distance of Tabrīz, Mashhad and even Tehran, as their Tsarist predecessors had done, and the oil-fields of Khūzistān, the largest single potential source of revenue for the government, remained firmly under British control. Thus, for all his bravado, Riżā Shāh was forced to conduct a pragmatic, fairly cautious, and not always consistent foreign policy, which achieved less in the assertion of national independence than many had hoped or expected.

With the Soviets, he seems to have been able to maintain a reasonable understanding until the late 1930s, when the approach of the Second World War forced him to make irrevocable choices. With Great Britain, his dealings were more ambiguous because, while he was determined to reduce as far as possible the influence of the British in Iran's internal affairs, there was a limit to what could be achieved. His government could and did maintain its international standing quite assertively and successfully, but could do virtually nothing with regard to the overwhelming concern of every Iranian nationalist, either at that

time or until the oil-nationalization crisis of the 1950s: the fact that Iran's one major source of wealth was in the hands of a British-owned company which extracted and sold as much or as little oil as it chose, with most of the profits going to the British stockholders and government, while the Iranian government received inadequate royalties and had no access to the company's accounts. Furthermore, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company operated in the oil-fields and refinery-area as if in a foreign enclave. Most company officials knew little about Iran, beyond what they needed to know to carry out their business, and while the managerial echelons were the preserve of Europeans, and the middle-ranking employees generally Indian, Iranians were engaged only in the lowest and least-skilled positions. Viewed in this fashion from Tehran, the operations of the company were a barely-disguised form of colonialism. A gnawing sense that the nation was being robbed came to be felt with increasing intensity and bitterness, while the fiscal needs of the new Iran grew ever greater. Without additional oil revenues, those needs could only be met by the Iranian taxpayer.

These considerations lay at the heart of Riżā Shāh's stance towards Great Britain, although policy directions necessarily fluctuated with the exigencies of the moment. His firmest assertion of his position came in November 1932, when he announced the decision to cancel the D'Arcy Concession of 1901, regarded by Iranians as exploitive and unfair. This temporarily raised his prestige to new heights as a champion of the national interest. However, having taken this decision, he found himself confronted by difficulties similar to those which were to confront Muṣaddiq two decades later: the company remained intransigent, the British government supported the company and threatened force, while anti-British demonstrations in Tehran had no effect on oil production. Riżā Shāh finally agreed to a new negotiated settlement in 1933, which was to run for sixty years and could not be unilaterally cancelled. The terms of the agreement modestly raised Iran's royalties and there were assurances of increased employment for Iranian nationals. However, the Shah had conspicuously failed to break the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's hold over the country's principal economic resource, and that failure helps to explain his increasing friendship with Germany, the main characteristic of his foreign policy for the rest of the reign.

The Oil Agreement of 1933 clearly demonstrated the limitations which could be imposed from outside upon Iran's freedom of action and contributed further to the prevailing mood of xenophobia. Yet apart from this set-back, Riżā Shāh proved quite successful at drawing the world's attention to what he regarded as the rebirth of his nation. Much of this renewed interest in Iran sprang from the government's deliberate policy of identifying the new Pahlavī Iran with the

ancient empires of the distant past, stressing contemporary Iran's historic origins and cultural continuities, and distancing it from its Arab neighbours. Meanwhile, Riżā Shāh was determined to have Iran treated as a fully sovereign state. Of all the symbols of qualified sovereignty bequeathed from the recent past, the most humiliating were the Capitulations, which excluded foreign nationals from the jurisdiction of the Iranian courts. Since the law administered by these courts was, in origin, Islamic, this exclusion was not without some justification as regards non-Muslim foreigners, yet the Capitulations were clear proof of diminished sovereignty and therefore greatly resented. As suggested above, it seems likely that Riżā Shāh's vigorous drive for judicial reform early in his reign was linked with his determination to abrogate the Capitulations as soon as possible, which he did in 1928. The case for their retention was greatly weakened by the introduction of a new legal system and codes based upon European practice.

While at home Riżā Shāh remodelled the structure of the Foreign Ministry and initiated a new generation of diplomats to represent their country overseas, abroad he extended Iranian diplomatic representation to increase his country's presence on the international scene. He also sought to ensure Iranian participation in the numerous international conferences which derived from the foundation of the League of Nations, to which Iran had been an early signatory. Nor was it a mere caprice of Riżā Shāh to insist on the substitution of *Iran* for *Persia* as the official name of the country, but a symptom of the new self-conscious national pride. Henceforth, the country was to be known by the name which its people used, not a European derivation from Classical and Biblical usage.

Riżā Shāh also enjoyed considerable success in making Iran more conspicuous as a presence in the Middle East. In an era of regional pacts, his government worked strenuously to create a system of alliances with its neighbours, Turkey, Iraq and Afghanistan, leading to the Saʿadābād Pact of 1937. There was some initial hesitation, especially on the part of Iraq, partly as a consequence of British disapproval but also due to irritation at the revival of Iran's irredentist claims to Baḥrain in May 1934, followed by tension over the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab frontier, which paralysed diplomatic progress during 1936. But in the middle of the following year representatives of all four states assembled in Tehran. On 4 July, a frontier agreement was signed between Iran and Iraq which defused a potentially explosive conflict between the two, and a few days later, on 8 July, the four-power agreement was signed in the Saʿadābād Palace. The long-term consequences of this agreement were negligible, but in the short term it served a useful purpose for Riżā Shāh in enhancing his international stature. So also, in

1938, did the marriage of the Crown Prince, Muḥammad Riẓā, to Princess Fawzia, sister of King Fārūq of Egypt: the Pahlavī family had been admitted into the contracting circle of international royalty.

Set against the reality of a century or more of domination by Great Britain and Russia, these were gestures which assuaged, but did not heal, the wounds to national pride inflicted during the Qājār period. There was still a need for powerful friends in the international community as a counterweight to the two Great Powers. Riẓā Shāh was not the first Iranian ruler to attempt to find them, but he was the first to attain any degree of success. Even at the time of the abortive Anglo-Iranian Agreement of 1919, both France and the United States of America had shown concern at what they perceived to be the beginnings of a British protectorate. Now, in the very different circumstances of an Iran reborn under Pahlavī rule, an extension of diplomatic contacts seemed the logical way of further distancing Iran from Great Britain and the Soviet Union. Riẓā Shāh did not woo France. He perhaps assumed that difficulties over the Syria and Lebanon Mandates, as well as domestic problems, left that country with little inclination for involvement further afield. On the other hand, the United States seemed the ideal counterweight to Great Britain and the Soviet Union. It had emerged victorious and immeasurably stronger and richer from the First World War, and had no tradition of colonialism as the Iranians understood the term. American post-war participation on the international stage indicated prudence and moderation, while in Tehran, the pre-war episode of Morgan Shuster and his ouster as a result of British and Russian opposition had left a predisposition to regard Americans differently from other Westerners. Riẓā Shāh was not alone in thinking along these lines. Only a few months after the 1921 *coup d'état*, Qavām al-Salṭana, having replaced Sayyid Żiyā al-Dīn, instructed Ḥusain ʿAlā, Iran's representative in Washington, to make known Iran's need for both loans and financial advisers, as well as to hint at the possibility of an oil concession in the north. He thereby hoped to draw the Americans into a situation in which they, merely by their presence, would diminish the likelihood of renewed British or Russian pressure. What Qavām al-Salṭana, and later Riẓā Shāh and his advisers, failed to appreciate was the growing mood of isolationism in the United States and that country's unwillingness at that time to arouse British susceptibilities in a region which American foreign affairs experts still regarded as a British preserve.

The United States did provide a financial adviser, A.C. Millspaugh, who achieved considerable success at reorganizing the country's finances between 1922 and 1927. He was, however, resented by both the British and the Russians, as Shuster had been, and his position was such that he was bound to make

powerful enemies. Moreover, he was completely unsuccessful in the one matter upon which Riżā Shāh himself set so much store: an American loan. An increasingly unpopular figure in Tehran, he found that the advice which he gave to the Shah was frequently unpalatable, and he was finally forced to resign. Riżā Shāh's dissatisfaction with the Millspaugh mission, however, was primarily a reflection of his disappointment with the United States for its cool response to his overtures. Initial American interest in an oil concession, to which the much-needed loan would have been linked, produced discussions but provoked the opposition of the British and Soviet governments, while the Anglo-Persian Oil Company vigorously protested at an apparent threat to its monopoly of the transit of oil across the country. Soviet complaints were of relatively little concern to the Americans. The attitude of Great Britain, however, was another matter. In the last resort, the United States government did not regard Iran worth the price of antagonizing the British. The negotiations were called off in a manner which left the Shah bitterly resentful: still the fate of Iran was being decided in London and Moscow. It was this increasing sense of frustration which led him to look with favour upon closer ties with the Third Reich.

From an Iranian point of view, such ties were very appealing. Germany had no tradition of imperial intervention in the Middle East to wound Iranian sensibilities. It was one of the world's most advanced nations in science and technology, well able to provide assistance to an under-developed country like Iran. It had capital, technical advisers, and industrial plant and machinery ready for export. As an added attraction, it had been since the late 19th century a rival to Great Britain and Russia. For Germany too, involvement in Iran was an interesting proposition. Iran was a backward country, but one beginning to make great strides and requiring assistance for its further development. There were also great opportunities for investment with little risk. These factors contributed to increased collaboration between the two.

Germany, in effect, played the principal outsider's rôle in the economic development of Iran between the World Wars. As early as 1926, Junkers acquired the right of direct flights from Germany to Iran as well as some internal links between Iranian cities, while a sea-link between Hamburg and the Persian Gulf at last broke the virtual monopoly on communications with Iran, hitherto maintained by Great Britain and the Soviet Union. Because Great Britain needed the co-operation of the Iranian government with regard to her own air-service to India, she was in no position to oppose these concessions to the Germans. Inside Iran, German firms were engaged in road-building and the initial survey of the route for the Trans-Iranian railway. Although the engineering contracts finally went to Sweden, German companies also supplied much of the material

needed for the railway's construction. By the late 1930s, plans were afoot to assist Iran in building an iron-foundry and a steel-mill. Of even greater significance, on the eve of the Second World War, Germany accounted for nearly half of Iran's overseas trade, made possible by German willingness to operate a barter system favourable to the export of Iranian commodities.

But by this time, the highly visible German presence in Iran had aroused the apprehensions of both Great Britain and the Soviet Union. After Germany attacked the latter, and Britain and Russia became wartime allies, Germany's civilian "bridgehead" in neutral Iran became a matter of grave concern to the former rivals. As the German armies pressed eastwards, Great Britain began to fear for the safety of the Khūzistān oil-fields, while the Soviet Union, desperately in need of war-materials, looked to Iran and its newly-built railway as a funnel through which supplies could reach her from her western allies. In the face of these concerns, Riẓā Shāh remained impenitent over his friendship with Hitler's Germany. He reaffirmed Iran's neutrality, refused to expel the large number of German nationals living in Iran, declined to join the Allies and refused permission for the Trans-Iranian railway to be used for the transport of war-materials. It is possible that his intransigence owed something to his satisfaction at defying the two Powers which had for so long bullied his country, but the real justification for his attitude was the fact that the news was of German victories on all fronts, especially in the panzer thrust towards the Caucasus.

On 19 July, and again on 16 August 1941, the British and Soviet representatives in Tehran demanded that the Iranian government adopt measures to reduce the danger of a German take-over. Riẓā Shāh's refusal, on the grounds of Iran's declared neutrality, to respond to what was essentially an ultimatum resulted in invasion by British and Soviet units on 25 August, the beginning of an occupation which continued throughout the duration of the war. In the end, Riẓā Shāh had erred in much the same way as some of his despised Qājār predecessors. He had forgotten that whenever the two Powers were in accord, Iran automatically reverted to the rôle of a pawn. Only when the two were seriously embroiled in conflict with each other did Iran acquire some room for manoeuvre.

With no other option open to him, Riẓā Shāh abdicated on 16 September 1941, thereby ensuring the succession of his son, Muḥammad Riẓā, an arrangement acceptable to the Allies. He then boarded a British warship at Bandar ʿAbbās, accompanied by members of his family, expecting to be permitted to go into exile in either the Far East or in Latin America. Instead, he was taken first to Mauritius until his deteriorating health led to his transfer to the Transvaal, where he died in 1944.

Although historians will differ in their assessments of the first Pahlavī Shah and his impact upon the country, the two decades of his rule must be regarded as a highly significant phase in the recent history of Iran. There can be no disputing that, even without his dynamic leadership, many changes would have come to Iran in the period between the World Wars, but it is difficult to imagine what the 1920s and 1930s would have been like without that formidable presence in the foreground. He was both admired and hated, sometimes by the same person. The early years of his rule saw the introduction of measures of the greatest importance for the entire country, but as the years passed, the inherent limitations of the quintessential dictator – his greed, suspicion and cynicism – took on a heightened dimension. In the end, he governed alone, without able executives, intelligent counsellors or honest critics. Those whose abilities seemed threatening, whose motives he mistrusted, who challenged his opinions, or who opposed his will were disgraced, imprisoned, murdered or driven into exile.

One of the shrewdest estimates of his impact upon his contemporaries was made by a distinguished scholar only a few years after his fall.

> It was unfortunate for Persia that by the 1920s when Riẓā Shāh rose to power the better had not learned to control the worse, and thus it was that Riẓā Shāh, by acting through the worse, was able to maintain himself in power. It was unfortunate, too, that the political judgement of the people had had by this time little opportunity to develop through experience; its defects were inevitably reflected in the dictatorship. External circumstances, no doubt, also contributed to the rise of Riẓā Shāh and to his success in maintaining himself in power. . . . Nevertheless, the fundamental cause both of his rise to power and his ability to maintain himself in power must be sought in the internal condition of the country prevailing at that time, in the political incapacity and incompetence of the people, and the internecine struggles, which prevented effective co-operation for the common end of resisting brutal oppression. . . . Riẓā Shāh was the price Persia had to pay for undue delay in making the political and social adjustments which were implied in her incorporation as a national state into Western Society. . . . The house had been swept of much of the past that remained, but nothing solid had been put in its place. Riẓā Shāh had failed to create a situation in which the unimpaired faculties of the people could find scope in effective and creative social action. They had been denied all share in political and social activities. No outlet had been left for the ambitions and capacities of the individual citizens. As a result the more sensitive natures had become even more quietist, while the less sensitive had occupied themselves with, and finally become engrossed in, the sordid pursuit of making money. The inevitable consequence had been a degradation on the moral plane. When Riẓā Shāh went, and with him the hollow régime which he had built up, there remained a spiritual vacuum.[29]

[29] Lambton, *op. cit.*, pp. 13–14.

CHAPTER 7

THE PAHLAVĪ AUTOCRACY: MUḤAMMAD RIẒĀ SHĀH, 1941–1979

THE ASCENDANCY OF QAVĀM AL-SALṬANA, 1941–7

In Iran, as 1941 ended, the fact that it was an occupied country was more important than the departure of the former ruler and the accession of his twenty-two-year-old son. British and Soviet military units maintained order in the major urban centres and ensured that the communications system contributed to helping the war effort. None of the three allies had any immediate interest in the country itself. Their concern was primarily strategic: to keep the Germans out, ensure the flow of oil, and assist the Soviets with war-materials transported across Iran's mountains and deserts by rail and road. In these circumstances, Iranian politicians found themselves relatively free to pursue their own goals, constrained only by the Allies' preoccupation with internal security. Although public opinion took it for granted that the fate of the country depended once again upon the whims of the British and Russian ambassadors, reviving memories of conditions under the last Qājārs, the reality was rather different. Iran was beginning a decade in which Constitutionalism, accompanied by factional strife, could enjoy free play. The power struggles now being played out were, once again, the politics of élite politicians, landowners or wealthy entrepreneurs for the most part, or their agents; but what was important was that parliament mattered again, as did the office of prime minister. Parties as significant entities did not exist; party slogans and party groupings did. Perhaps a more accurate measure of the resuscitation of political life, febrile though it often appeared to be, was the flowering of a press now comparatively uncensored. Most newspapers and periodicals proved extremely ephemeral (one scholar has counted 464 titles, of which 433 were in Persian, appearing between 1941 and 1947[1]) but their quantity is evidence that, politically, the country was coming alive again.

Muḥammad Riẓā Shāh was at this time inexperienced and insecure. His father's overpowering presence had been suddenly withdrawn, and from what he knew of his country's past history, he might well have felt, when he read the

[1] L.P. Elwell-Sutton, "The Iranian Press, 1941–1947", p. 65.

texts of speeches in the *Majlis* or received visitors from the British and Soviet embassies, in much the same situation as the young Aḥmad Shāh Qājār during the First World War. He seems to have reacted by devoting himself to physical recreation and acting as a playboy.

The politicians who emerged during the war years were, for the most part, elderly representatives of the generation which had grown up before the First World War. They regarded the twenty-year rule of Rizā Shāh as an oppressive interlude best forgotten. Few possessed much direct experience of cabinet government, an exception being Qavām al-Salṭana. Their personal ambitions and prevailing rôles called more for mental agility in intrigue and strong negotiating skills than for qualities of constructive statesmanship. In any case, theirs was "a holding operation" until the Allies left.

The chronic political instability of the war years might well have continued for long afterwards but for the swift subordination of all other issues to what became known as the Āẕarbāījān crisis. The background to this episode was the Soviet occupation of much of north-western Iran during the war, which enabled them to create the circumstances for the future secession of Āẕarbāījān and neighbouring territories by encouraging Soviet-trained or pro-Soviet political groups. In pursuing these goals, the Soviets enjoyed the advantages of operating in a politically sophisticated part of the country which had a tradition of political activism and radicalism dating back to the Constitutional Movement, and which had deep grievances against the Tehran government. Moreover, some Āẕarī-speaking Turks of the region were not immune to the blandishments of fellow-Āẕarbāījānīs north of the Aras. When British military units withdrew from Iran in March 1946, a Soviet military presence remained behind and under its mantle two autonomous, and potentially secessionist, régimes came into being in the northwest: one, in Āẕarbāījān, headed by the veteran Iranian Bolshevik, Jaʿfar Pīshavarī, whose political career extended back to the short-lived Soviet Republic of Gīlān in 1920–1; and the other, in those Kurdish districts west of Lake Urmīya, for which the town of Mahābād was a focal-point.

While Great Britain and the United States of America discreetly enquired as to Soviet intentions, and politicians in the capital became anxious, the two Soviet satellite régimes consolidated their positions. It was fortunate for Iran that at such a time a consummate and far-sighted statesman was at hand to guide the country through a critical period which could have seen permanent territorial loss. The crisis built up throughout the last months of 1945 and into the new year. On 20 January 1946 the prime minister, Ibrāhīm Ḥakīmī, resigned and a few days later, by a margin of one vote, the Majlis chose Qavām al-Salṭana

(Aḥmad Qavām) as his successor. On his record alone, Qavām was eminently qualified for the task, with a political career extending back to the pre-1914 constitutional period. During the years immediately following the First World War he had held a succession of high offices, including the premiership. A Qājār by birth and an aristocrat by temperament, he was urbane, sceptical and wary, a man of few illusions.[2]

Qavām had always sought to evade the damning label of being a protégé of any embassy, and as early as the 1920s had advocated bringing the Americans into Iran to serve as a counterweight to the British and the Soviets. Of the latter, he knew something at first hand, having been educated partly in pre-revolutionary Russia, and having established during the Second World War an amicable, if realistic, working relationship with the Tūda (Masses) Party. At that time this was the only significant political association in Iran, although increasingly seen as the tool of the Soviet Union. Originally, the Tūda Party had been led by radical politicians who had been educated in Germany, or had spent years of political exile in that country. Some had political origins as Majlis deputies who had fled from Tehran, first to Qum and then to the protection of German-Turkish units in Kirmānshāh in 1915. After the Second World War this leadership was increasingly replaced by men trained in the Soviet Union. Both in the capital and outside they were a fact of Iranian political life, which no government could ignore. It was a positive asset for Qavām that, unlike some of his rivals, he was able to communicate with the Tūda leaders and to some extent retain their confidence; most important, he was aware of their activities.

As he began to address the dilemma of what to do about the potentially separatist régimes in Tabrīz and Mahābād, Qavām deliberately assumed a posture of caution. To unfriendly or uncomprehending observers he seemed to shift well to the left of centre. As a public gesture of where his sympathies seemed to lie, on 16 February 1946 he dismissed the Chief of the Army Staff, General Ḥasan ʿArfā, who had the reputation of being a protégé of the British. Two days later, he left for Moscow for what were assumed to be conciliatory discussions with the Soviet Foreign Ministry. On his return he had nothing specific to report but appeared hopeful of fruitful exchanges with the new Soviet ambassador, due to arrive shortly, at which time the question of a Soviet oil-concession in the north could also be explored. Soon after this, with or without Qavām's prior knowledge, the Iranian representative at the United Nations,

[2] For an account of Qavām's personal style, see Avery, *Modern Iran*, pp. 382–3.

Ḥusain ʿAlā, brought up the question of the continuing presence of Soviet troops on Iranian soil, thereby exposing to international view a matter which had hitherto escaped world attention.[3] Qavām, ostensibly embarrassed, sought to disavow this move as an unnecessary irritant to the Soviets. Perhaps as a token gesture of goodwill towards the Tūda Party, he ordered the house-arrest of Sayyid Żiyā al-Dīn Ṭabāṭabāʾī whose *Ḥizb-i Irāda-yi Millī* (National Will Party) was strongly anti-Tūda and who was regarded as a staunchly Anglophile conservative.

On 24 March 1946, the Soviet ambassador informed Qavām that Soviet troop-withdrawals would begin that day, at the same time reminding him about Soviet concern regarding the autonomy of the Tabrīz and Mahābād régimes, and also about a Soviet oil-concession. The Soviets did not welcome the publicity which their relations with Iran were receiving at the United Nations, a further debate being scheduled in the Security Council for 6 May 1946, but their main preoccupation was clearly the question of a concession. On 5 April 1946, an agreement was signed specifying that within six weeks from 24 March 1946 Soviet army units would leave Iran; that the Soviet Union acknowledged the affairs of Āẕarbāījān to be an internal matter for the Iranian government; and that both parties were committed to negotiating a fifty-year oil-concession, which would be submitted to the Majlis within seven months of 24 March 1946.

This requirement of parliamentary ratification for the projected oil-concession was Qavām's trump-card, the result of a 1944 law introduced by Qavām's kinsman, Dr Muḥammad Muṣaddiq, the object of which was to curb foreign, in particular British, concessionary activity. Parliamentary discussion of so emotive a subject was bound to be stormy, yet even while Qavām was negotiating with the Soviets, the life of the current Majlis was drawing to a close, and there could be no new Majlis without elections. Qavām seems to have assured the Russians that he could guarantee the election of a parliament favourably disposed towards an oil agreement, but that while Russian troops were stationed on Iranian soil, their presence was bound to affect political discourse in the capital and to determine the public postures of parliamentary candidates and, eventually, the elected deputies. The Soviets could therefore appreciate Qavām's anxiety when he pressed to have all Soviet troops withdrawn as soon as possible as a precondition for holding elections. They were genuinely concerned about the prospects of their clients in Tabrīz and Mahābād, but the oil-

[3] Ḥusain ʿAlā (1883–1964) had been ambassador to Great Britain from 1934 to 1936, and Minister of Court from 1942 to 1945. He was ambassador to the United States from 1946 to 1950.

concession was apparently of higher priority. In the months that followed, Qavām therefore pursued two distinct lines of policy, seemingly contradictory, but intended in the end to converge.

First, he showed himself to be ostensibly pliant in his dealings with the Soviets, allowing them no grounds for complaint. He allowed them to circulate their propaganda, and that of their Iranian clients, without constraint; he publicly and assiduously upheld the cause of Iranian–Soviet friendship by means of cultural activities and social conviviality. Indeed, he seemed so well disposed towards the Tūda Party that his attitude caused considerable concern in Western diplomatic circles which failed to recognize the artistry of a Talleyrand. Perhaps anticipating Soviet suspicions over his behaviour, Qavām introduced three prominent Tūda Party members into his cabinet, reinforcing this leaning to the left with the appointment of Prince Muẓaffar Fīrūz as his deputy. Prince Fīrūz had the reputation of an extreme radical, besides being bitterly hostile to the Shah, whose father had murdered his father.[4] To the Soviets, this cabinet reshuffle must have confirmed the impression of Qavām as a fellow-traveller.

While Qavām was publicly assuaging Soviet doubts and arousing Western suspicions as to his intentions, he could not afford to wait upon events in Tabrīz and Mahābād. Both régimes, especially that of Tabrīz, were becoming assertive, secure in their certainty of Soviet protection. Their achievements had been by no means negligible, despite the hostile reporting of Western journalists. Land redistribution was beginning on a modest scale, with more expected later; the region acquired a much-needed university at Tabrīz; there was evidence of a concern for public welfare. Both régimes were continually consolidating, and in so doing forging new loyalties and a new governing infrastructure. The danger of secession, followed by integration with Soviet Āẕarbāījān, was real. For Qavām, the problem was that intervention could lead to disorder, hence giving the Soviets a pretext for the return of their troops to these provinces. Thus, the risk in taking action was as great as the danger of not doing so. Fortunately for Qavām, the forthcoming elections required the central government to become more than usually involved in provincial matters. On the grounds of ensuring a proper climate of opinion in which to conduct a peaceful election, he moved loyal army units into Āẕarbāījān. This tactic seems to have unnerved the Soviets, who had to weigh an instinctive desire to come to the aid of their protégés in Tabrīz and Mahābād with a more pressing concern for the outcome of an

[4] A report of the British Military Attaché (18 February 1946) stated: "All his political activities are directed to one end – opposition to the present Shah, whom he wishes to remove as vengeance for the death of his father." Quoted in Abrahamian, *Iran between Two Revolutions*, p. 227.

election which would result in an oil concession. Caught between these two alternatives, they failed to react to the pressures which were now applied by Tehran to bring the "rebel" provinces into line.

Unfortunately for Qavām, the need to employ the army in the task of coercion brought the Shah, as Commander-in-Chief, into the affair, which made it certain that ruler and army would gain most of the credit for restoring the errant provinces, as proved to be the case. The Shah, drawing closer to the officer-corps which had not hitherto seen in him his father's mettle, won the advantage in both the short and the long term from Qavām's skilful resolution of the Āẕarbāījān crisis. But the premier knew that the army had to be employed if the country were to remain intact, so the order was given. On 12 December 1946 the army, led by the Shah, entered Tabrīz, to inaugurate a blood-bath of reprisals and a reign of terror, action soon to be repeated in Mahābād. Pīshavarī, the veteran Bolshevik, and the wily Kurdish chieftain, Mullā Barzānī, both escaped: the former, to the Soviet Union, where he died shortly afterwards in a road-accident; the latter, to Iraq, to play a leading rôle in the Kurdish rebellions of the 1950s and 1960s. Their followers were less fortunate. As one historian wrote,

> After the reoccupation of the provincial cities, the gallant central Iranian troops inflicted mass "punishment" on innocent and defenceless people on the express orders of their high command and the supreme commander, Muhammad Reżā Shah, himself. There was wholesale killing, burning, looting and rape. For this time Azerbijan had been invaded not by foreigners but by fellow Iranians! Since then, 10 December, "the day of the Iranian army", has been a public holiday on which "the liberation of Azerbijan" is celebrated with pomp and circumstance.[5]

Meanwhile, Qavām had been proceeding with the complex arrangements for a parliamentary election. On the one hand, he had to ensure that the Soviets were convinced of the sincerity of his endeavours on their behalf, and on the other, that the new Majlis would be certain to do what was required. Paradoxically, for his plans to succeed, he needed an assembly which would not be too pliant. So far as electoral rigging was concerned, the rural seats, usually in the gift of one or more local notables, were rarely in doubt. The urban constituencies, however, were becoming less predictable. In some, the Tūda Party was strongly entrenched. But it was in these urban constituencies that candidates had to take account of the depth and intensity of nationalist feeling, which was most often anti-British but could swing swiftly against anyone or anything smacking of

[5] Katouzian, *The Political Economy of Modern Iran*, p. 155. See also Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East*, p. 395, and Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East, 1945–1951*, p. 62.

foreign exploitation. Mention of oil concessions, invariably associated with the notion of foreigners filching the nation's resources, could instantly arouse strong nationalist fervour. The possibility of a Soviet oil agreement was already doing so, as Qavām had known and hoped it would.

When at last the long-delayed elections were completed, the new Majlis clearly did not have the radical composition upon which the Soviets had counted. The question was whether it would respond to Qavām's persuasion, as the Soviets hoped, or follow its own will. Either way, the Soviets were forced to rely upon Qavām's good-will, having no alternative to him. As promised, once the new parliament was in session, on 22 October 1947, the prime minister gave the house his account of the oil negotiations with the Soviet Union. The Majlis, responding enthusiastically to Muṣaddiq's oratorical gifts, passed an almost unanimous resolution (102 to 2) declaring the government's negotiations with the Soviets null and void. The prime minister was only grudgingly exempted from the penalties prescribed in the law of 22 December 1944 concerning members of the government who undertook unauthorized oil negotiations with foreigners. It was resolved that Iran would grant no further oil concessions to foreign powers or companies, and; "In all cases where the rights of the Iranian nation . . . have been impaired, particularly in regard to the southern oil, the Government is required to enter into such negotiations and take such measures as are necessary to regain the national rights, and inform the Majlis of the results".[6] This last statement referred directly to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. Qavām appeared to have suffered a crushing reverse, and in fact he had, but it is probable that this is exactly what he had planned from the outset.

The prime minister remained in office for nearly another two months but his authority was waning fast. While he was abused by the Soviets and maligned by the Western allies, the Shah and the army were being acclaimed as the restorers of the recalcitrant provinces to the nation. Few understood, then or later, what Qavām had achieved. Āẕarbāījān is the sole example of a territory passing to the Soviets during the Cold War, and being then restored. But the prime minister could not survive without a following inside or outside parliament. He had neither, and the court detested him.[7] On 10 December 1947, he resigned, following a vote of no confidence in the Majlis. Although he returned for a few days as premier in the crisis of 1952, his work was done. Nevertheless, his handling of the Āẕarbāījān crisis, with its implicit threat to the nation's integrity,

[6] Quoted in Avery, *op. cit.*, p. 400.

[7] For evidence of the Pahlavī family's hostility towards Qavām, see Ashraf Pahlavī, *Faces in a Mirror*, pp. 81–2 and 89–90, and Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, *Answer to History*, p. 75.

marks him out as perhaps the one constructive Iranian statesmen of the 20th century.

THE RISE AND FALL OF MUṢADDIQ, 1947–53

For the next two and a half years, the government continued to function through the established instruments of prime minister, cabinet and parliament, the last still without an effective party system. Apart from the Tūda Party, which continued to expand, particularly in urban centres, there seemed to be little choice between left or right, nationalists, democrats, conservatives or monarchists. The affiliations of these factions were subject to sudden shifts. There were no leaders of Qavām's stature. Ḥakīmī was very old; ʿAlā was essentially a courtier-politician; Suhailī was tarred with the reputation of being pro-British. It is certain that during this period the Shah was gaining in political importance. No single personality strong enough to counter this trend existed to replace Qavām. The prestige and patronage which inevitably accrued to the court encouraged this process, as did the loyalists who had survived from the preceding reign. They saw a strong Shah as a bulwark against factional turmoil. Most important was the alliance between the throne and the army. The army's reputation had been tarnished since the military débâcle of 1941, but was now enjoying renown for the "liberation" of Āẕarbāījān, as was the Shah. Thus, when the former Chief of Staff, General ʿAlī Razmārā, was appointed prime minister on 26 June 1950, he was considered to be the Shah's man, not parliament's. It was taken for granted that his government's direction would differ from that taken by the governments of former premiers, who had been preoccupied with playing off one Majlis faction against another.[8]

Abused as a man of straw in the pay of the British or the Americans, criticized by the Western Allies for his gestures of goodwill towards the Soviets and later execrated as a pawn of the Shah, Razmārā also managed to arouse deep fears that he would prove an authoritarian reformer and provoked the enmity of several influential courtiers. In fact, he seems to have been an intelligent, serious-minded, patriotic and cultivated soldier, certainly capable of the requisite ruthlessness, but caught between forces too extreme to allow him to follow a middle course. Shah and court expected him to pursue their goals by facilitating

[8] General ʿAlī Razmārā (1901–1951) was in command of the operation for the reoccupation of Āẕarbāījān in November–December 1946. For the opinion of two British Ambassadors, writing in November 1949 and December 1950, that the Shah was already averse to ministers with strong personalities, see Louis, *op. cit.*, pp. 633 and 637. See also Arfa, *Under Five Shahs*, p. 375.

a shift in real political power from parliament to palace. Conservatives expected him to preserve the *status quo*. Radicals called for reform but were unwilling to support real change which might jeopardize their interests. Above all, nationalists, whether of right or left, called for action against the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (A.I.O.C.). Having neither a parliamentary power-base nor the self-assurance of a Qavām, and regarded rightly or wrongly by virtually everyone as the Shah's man, Razmārā had few options from which to choose. Above all, neither he nor any other Iranian politician at that time could circumvent the issue which now occupied the centre stage of national politics: oil nationalization.

Already in the summer of 1949, the Iranian government and the A.I.O.C. had been under pressure to renegotiate their relationship. They had signed a revised agreement, known as the Supplemental Oil Agreement or, at that time, the Gass–Gulshāyān Agreement, after its principal negotiators, which Iranian law required to be submitted to the Majlis for ratification. Even if the fifteenth Majlis had been willing to ratify it, the fact was that it had failed to do so before its session ended. During the protracted elections which preceded the convening of the sixteenth Majlis, opposition to the Company and its operations, echoed by virtually all significant political groups and parties, assumed overwhelming proportions. Expressions of moderation were seen as treason. Aware of Iran's financial dependency upon the oil industry, lacking the survival instincts of the true politician, and scornful of the martyrs' rhetoric which held that Iran could stand against the world, Razmārā indicated to the new Majlis that he supported the Supplemental Oil Agreement. However, the special commission, established by the assembly to review the agreement, rejected it in its entirety. Razmārā's support for what was essentially a compromise settlement with the company thus allowed his enemies to portray him as a traitor in the pay of the British.

Nevertheless, for the remainder of 1950 the prime minister appeared to be very much in control, helped by a rather more favourable economic climate than in the recent past. Then, in February 1951, the Majlis flatly rejected the company's proposal for fifty-fifty profit-sharing,[9] while the Assembly's Special Oil Commission, chaired by Dr Muṣaddiq, proceeded to review alternative options open to the government. Few doubted that the commission's deliberations would lead to a recommendation for outright nationalization, which it made on 19 February 1951. Facing this recommendation head on, Razmārā

[9] See Chapter 18, pp. 660–1 for another account of these events.

repudiated it as simply impracticable, but in the current emotional atmosphere nothing was easier than to misrepresent the prime minister's position. On 7 March 1951, he was assassinated by a member of the extremist *Fidāʾiyān-i Islām*. Such was the mood of the time that the assassin was acclaimed as a saviour of the nation and granted a pardon by parliament.[10]

Whatever Razmārā's record had been – and he had given evidence of energy and resourcefulness – it can be said that no premier who did not support nationalization could have survived. Isolated by a court which dreaded drawing upon itself the opprobrium of opposing or even qualifying nationalization, Razmārā was the victim of the notion that pragmatism can prevail in a political milieu charged with intense emotion. The Shah, it seems, viewed his removal from the scene with mixed feelings, despite Razmārā's ostensible but not, according to recent research, unquestionable loyalty to the throne. Muḥammad Riżā Shāh feared strong-willed, independently-minded prime ministers, and he may well have come to regard Razmārā with the same kind of suspicion with which he had regarded Qavām before him. Writing thirty years later in his memoirs, his assessment of Razmārā was not generous.

> Razmara . . . could not or would not bring negotiations with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company to a conclusion. His performance in Parliament was terrible. He failed to articulate clearly the government's positions and was widely perceived as an ineffective parliamentarian.[11]

With Razmārā gone, the Shah turned to the faithful ʿAlā as a caretaker premier, knowing, like most political observers, that this could only be an interim appointment. The political mood in Iran was frenetic. In the Majlis debates, especially those relating to policy on oil, one man, Dr Muḥammad Muṣaddiq, had come to dominate the Assembly. Muṣaddiq had a loosely-knit and broad-based coalition of supporters in the Majlis, known as *Jabha-yi Millī* (The National Front). He was also gaining an increasing following in the streets and bazaars, which made him a formidable figure who, in the past months, had risen to prominence, nationally and internationally, as chairman of the Parliamentary Oil Commission. His time had now come. With grave misgivings, the Shah accepted the inevitable, and appointed him prime minister. He was bowing both to the will of the Majlis and to that of the overwhelming majority of his people.

[10] The *Fidāʾiyān-i Islām* was a secret fraternity founded in the mid 1940s by Sayyid Mujtabā Navāb Ṣafavī, who was subsequently hanged in January 1956. See Kazemi, "The *Fadaʾiyan-i Islam*"; Ioannides, *America's Iran*, pp. 52–7; and Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, pp. 258–9.

[11] Pahlavi, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

For the historian, Muṣaddiq remains something of an enigma.[12] During his premiership, the western Press persistently derided and misrepresented him. In his own country, however, during the dark years of Pahlavī repression, he came to be seen as a selfless patriot and the lost leader, the victim of court intrigue and foreign intervention. His personality, as reflected in his public life and speeches, does not allow easy categorization. It has been said that he was a peculiarly Iranian phenomenon. On the international scene, he stood out as the leader of an emerging country who dared to defy Europe's established political and economic hegemony, as did such other "revolutionary" figures of the day as Nasser, Nehru, Nkrumah or Sukarno. For Muṣaddiq to challenge the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company was as courageous and reckless as Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal; but such analogies must not be pursued too far. In spite of a century of subjection to Russian and British domination, Iran had never been a colony, and Muṣaddiq's roots were very different from those of contemporary anti-colonial nationalist leaders. To the British, for example, Nehru, educated at Harrow and Cambridge, or Jinnah, the immaculate barrister-at-law, were readily comprehensible figures; Muṣaddiq was not. Muṣaddiq's political style did not accord with the West's preconceptions of how a Third World leader would be likely to act, and this incomprehension on the part of his foreign adversaries substantially exacerbated the tragedy of his career. Muṣaddiq exasperated the Americans almost as much as he infuriated the British, who felt that negotiation with him was impossible. From the perspective of Washington, Nkrumah was a not untypical product of American college education and Nehru could be represented as a kind of Indian Jefferson. By comparison, Muṣaddiq, with his flamboyant rhetoric and histrionic performances, would have been a figure of fun, had he not seemed to imperil a Western bastion against the U.S.S.R. Westerners in Iran who thought that they understood the politicians of the old school, and found the soldierly Razmārā relatively straightforward to deal with, seem not to have known what to make of Muṣaddiq.

Unfortunately, it will never be known what this man might have achieved. His two years in office as prime minister, a period of extreme political tension, provide few clues as to how he would have behaved in a more peaceful time. In foreign affairs, he would presumably have followed a neutral course, avoiding, like Nehru, close ties with either of the Super Powers, and taking Iran into the non-aligned grouping of the Bandung Conference (1955). He would probably

[12] Muḥammad Muṣaddiq (1881–1967) was of Qājār descent. After studying in Europe, he returned to Iran in 1914 and became a Majlis deputy. He opposed Riẓā Khān's assumption of the crown and was subsequently forced out of public life. In 1944, he was re-elected to the Majlis.

have introduced welfare legislation in an attempt to ameliorate the appalling conditions under which most Iranians lived. He would surely have avoided the vast military expenditure, and the accompanying extravagance and waste, which characterized the last twenty-five years of the Shah's reign.

But Muṣaddiq subordinated what many would consider a realistic appraisal of what was politically possible and economically desirable to a deeply ingrained sense of the wrongs which he, with so many others, felt that Iran had suffered at the hands of foreign exploiters. The explanation for this is partly biographical. Although in the early years of his career he had held high office and been at the centre of the governing process, he was now, in 1951, at the age of seventy, a national figure long excluded from the exercise of authority as a result of his unwavering opposition to the Pahlavī dynasty and its unconstitutional procedures. Embittered by years in the political wilderness, which had only ended with his election to the Majlis in 1944, he had become the quintessential opposition politician who could indulge in the luxury of disregarding the compromises by means of which men in power stay there. He had in his complex make-up certain self-destructive qualities. He was a spell-binding orator who could mock and deride, expose and wound, but he had little talent for conciliation. Essentially, he lacked Qavām's sagacity. It sometimes seemed that his political acts were inspired almost exclusively by his two lifelong obsessions: implacable hatred of the Pahlavī dynasty and no less implacable opposition to Great Britain's interventionist rôle in Iran's internal affairs. Neither obsession was hard to understand or unusual in the Iran of the 1950s. What seems to have been imprudent of Muṣaddiq was his attempt to pursue both simultaneously.

A passing judgement on Muṣaddiq in office might hold that, on tactical grounds, he should have avoided open confrontation with the court and supported the Shah until a satisfactory settlement with the A.I.O.C. had been achieved. Then should have come the trial of strength with the monarchy. Even before Qavām's resignation in December 1949, the Shah had been moving into a more active rôle on the political stage, a reality which any prime minister of the day had to face; and Muḥammad Riżā Shāh never liked prime ministers to be too successful or too much in the public view.

Muṣaddiq could reckon on little or no support from the throne as he challenged the A.I.O.C., meaning the British. Yet he still required support, and in this regard his position was somewhat ambiguous: he had neither an ideology with which to reinforce his charisma, nor a party through which to discipline his supporters. In place of ideology, there was the rhetoric of fervent nationalism, which fell upon receptive ears, but was no substitute for a well-articulated

programme of reform. As for party, he commanded no stable cadres in the Majlis, let alone organized support in the bazaars, or in workshops and factories such as the Tūda Party commanded. What he did have was the National Front. This, however, was not so much a party as a coalition: an accommodation of personalities, *daura*s (circles), alliances and groupings.[13] What its members had in common were strong nationalist sentiment, resentment of foreign interference in their country's affairs, support for oil nationalization and, in varying degrees of intensity, a commitment to modernizing and reformist legislation. The individuals ranged widely across the political spectrum: liberals and conservatives, progressives and radicals, secularists and Islamic modernizers. Yet it is impossible not to be impressed by an organization, however loosely it was held together, which counted among its founder members such men as Karīm Sanjābī and ʿAlī Shāygān, both professors of law, the latter, a Minister of Education under Qavām; the Paris-educated journalist, Ḥusain Fāṭimī; the mercurial Ḥusain Makkī; and from Qavām's former Democrat Party (*Ḥizb-i Demokrāt*), Aḥmad Rażavī, Shams al-Dīn Amīr ʿAlāʾī, Abūʾl-Ḥusain Hāʾirzāda, and Muẓaffar Baqāʾī of Kirmān, the future co-founder, with Khalīl Mālikī, of the *Ḥizb-i Zaḥmatkishān-i Millat-i Īrān* (The Iranian People's Toilers Party).[14] For all its shortcomings, the National Front contained most of what was positive, humane, and progressive in Iranian public life, and its leaders were, generally, the best of their generation.[15]

As a political movement, the National Front was seen to greatest advantage when compared with its opponents: fervent monarchists, religious conservatives, or radicals and communists. But it lacked coherence. There was too much indiscipline and volatile behaviour, with individuals coming and going, changing positions, regrouping in alliances, and pursuing private ambitions. Certainly, it provided Muṣaddiq with a following, and included a number of loyal and courageous supporters, but it was not enough. It was in part the inefficacy of the National Front as a political tool which led Muṣaddiq to turn to dangerous and finally self-destructive expedients: to enlist the Tūda Party as an ally; to seek supra-parliamentary powers; and, perhaps most hazardous of all, to appeal to the frustrated dispossessed who, for a brief moment, seemed convinced that all their griefs would be healed if the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company were to be evicted

[13] The institution of the *daura*, the intimate social group drawn together by common interests and sympathies (although not necessarily sharing a political ideology), has not received the detailed attention which it deserves, but see Zonis, *The Political Elite of Iran*, pp. 87, 238–42, and 279, and Bill, *The Politics of Iran*, pp. 44–9.

[14] See Katouzian, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

[15] For the origins and early composition of the National Front, see Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, pp. 251–61, and Cottam, *Nationalism in Iran*, pp. 259–85.

from Ābādān. But once he had stirred up popular emotion he could not control it. He used the fear of the mob to overawe the Majlis, threaten the throne, discourage opposition and demand special powers, but in so doing he was clearly taking great risks. As duly appointed prime minister, operating within the framework of a Constitution which he had upheld at some personal risk throughout his career, he now found himself undermining the very institutions in which he had so long put his faith. In so doing, he appeared as a demagogic dictator, losing support even amongst his own supporters. This reckless appeal to mob rule was a factor which undoubtedly contributed to the ease with which his government was overthrown in the August 1953 *coup d'état*. Demagogy lost him the political middle ground and set an example to his adversaries of the right, who exploited it more cynically and more ruthlessly than he had known how to.

Muṣaddiq also failed to comprehend that what, in his eyes, was an internal crisis concerning the operations within Iran of a foreign company unavoidably involved international politics. Forced to take these extraneous factors into account, he lacked Qavām's sense of timing and negotiating skill. In addition, the oil nationalization bill, which at his prompting the Majlis had hurriedly passed days after Razmārā's assassination, effectively closed his options for bargaining with the A.I.O.C., which was increasingly perceived to be an extension of the British government. In Great Britain there was now a Labour government, with its own large-scale programme of nationalization. Nevertheless, the Iranian move against the A.I.O.C. provoked great concern and resentment in London, where Muṣaddiq's nationalization project was regarded, especially among Conservatives, as being both an expropriation of a great imperial asset and a national humiliation. It was argued that the loss of access to cheap Iranian oil would have serious consequences for the British economy. In the harsh circumstances of the post-war years, access to cheap oil and the ability to earn foreign currency through its resale abroad were matters of prime concern to the British government, which also derived more tax revenue from the A.I.O.C. than the Iranian government earned in royalty payments. Whatever the justice of the Iranian case, not even a Labour government was willing or politically able to back down.[16]

Muṣaddiq's one hope, in a conflict which seemed to be growing ever more serious, was to discourage the United States from supporting its British ally. From the outset, Muṣaddiq seems to have assumed that American oil interests would take advantage of the dispute with the A.I.O.C. by encroaching on what

[16] For a *post facto* assessment of the British position during the crisis, by the Labour Government's Secretary of State for War in 1951, see Strachey, *The End of Empire*, p. 161.

had hitherto been a British preserve. This development did not, in fact, materialize. This was due to Washington's perception of Muṣaddiq's cavalier attitude to the international community and his flirtation with the left as a source of risk to the neutrality of Iran. It was argued that although Muṣaddiq was not pro-communist, his reckless handling of both friends and enemies in Tehran, and increasing dependence upon the Tūda Party for support, were turning him, intentionally or otherwise, into a Soviet tool. The growth of this perception in Washington, as well as loyalty to the Atlantic alliance, led the United States to join with the British and the monarchists in Iran in overthrowing the Muṣaddiq government. The rise and fall of Muṣaddiq is therefore closely linked with the oil nationalization crisis. In March 1951, the Majlis had approved the recommendation of the Special Commission on the oil industry, of which Muṣaddiq was the chairman, in favour of nationalization, and with that as the principal objective of his administration, Muṣaddiq became prime minister. The Majlis voted Muṣaddiq into the premiership on 30 April; on 1 May, he anounced the nationalization of the A.I.O.C., promising compensation.

The British, anticipating the course of events in Tehran, had already appealed to the International Court at The Hague, which ruled that it had no jurisdiction in the case, a position which seemed to recognize Iran's right to nationalize its assets if compensation were paid to the company. Neither the A.I.O.C. nor the British government were prepared to accept this, and although the United States had not hitherto appeared to object to nationalization, the realities of Cold War politics brought Washington increasingly behind London in opposing the Iranian *fait accompli*. This caused the major oil companies to support the A.I.O.C., so that Iran was faced with a boycott of her oil by all but a few maverick Italian and Japanese companies. Negotiations between the parties failed to produce results; there was intransigence on both sides. Increasingly confident of American support the British stood firm, persuading the United States that Muṣaddiq was becoming a prisoner of the Tūda and that loss of oil-royalties would facilitate a communist takeover in Iran. Moreover, they had additional means of putting pressure on the Iranian government. These included freezing Iran's sterling balances in Great Britain. Faced with a deteriorating economic situation, Muṣaddiq's government was forced to introduce unpopular measures. This lost the prime minister some of his centrist support, on the one hand tempting him to claim emergency powers; on the other, to look towards the Tūda and its allies for support. In so doing, he found himself bargaining with the left from a position of weakness, whereas Qavām had negotiated with it from one of strength. This shift to the left further inflamed American anxiety over a possible communist takeover. It also raised doubts

among the clerical supporters of the National Front, in particular the redoubtable Āyatullāh Kāshānī who, at the outset of Muṣaddiq's premiership, had been willing to support the government's goals of oil nationalization and the removal of outside influence in Iran's internal affairs.

In September 1951, following his address to the Security Council, to which Great Britain had appealed following the Iranian army's occupation of the Ābādān refinery, Muṣaddiq went to Washington to ask President Truman to provide a loan, now urgently needed. The request was brusquely shelved until such time as Iran patched up its quarrel with the British. Muṣaddiq returned to Tehran empty-handed, to face further deterioration of the economy, while the settlement of the oil dispute seemed as remote as ever. There were signs of popular discontent in street demonstrations and violent clashes between opposing factions. Resentment and rage against Great Britain and the United States naturally predominated in the political rhetoric of the times, but there was also a strong undercurrent of demands for social reform, with calls for radical change in the machinery of government. Although preoccupied with the oil crisis and, increasingly, with the hostility of the palace, Muṣaddiq was not unsympathetic to calls for reform. In the elections for the seventeenth Majlis, the National Front moved towards the left and urged major electoral reforms, but in so doing it alienated the landowners and tribal leaders, who now drew closer to the monarchists and the military. The National Front did well in urban constituencies, but badly in rural areas. Muṣaddiq, realizing that he was unlikely to command a majority in the new house, stopped the vote once a parliamentary quorum had been elected.

The Majlis assembled in February 1952. Several months of manoeuvring followed in which the National Front called for a programme of social justice, while conservatives sought in every possible way to hinder or distract the work of government. Then, quite suddenly, events came to a head. On 16 July 1952, Muṣaddiq insisted on exercising the prime minister's legitimate right to nominate the Minister of War. When the Shah refused to accept this, he resigned on the grounds that the monarch had violated the Constitution. The Shah then appointed as premier the aged and ill Qavām, but the public responded with five days of demonstrations, strikes and rioting, in which Āyatullāh Kāshānī played the leading role. Unnerved by the scale and intensity of the protests, the Shah capitulated, and recalled Muṣaddiq. The date, 21 July 1952 (*Sīyyum-i Tīr*), was commemorated as marking a popular and national uprising.[17]

Muṣaddiq's position after July 1952 was apparently far stronger than before.

[17] For Qavām's reaction to the Shah's capitulation, see Katouzian, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

The Shah had been forced to back down, and with him Muṣaddiq's conservative and foreign enemies had lost ground. Among the masses Muṣaddiq's popularity increased. He seemed to embody an unflinching courage and incorruptible patriotism which had once defied Riẓā Shāh himself and now defied his son. He had stood up to the detested foreigners and overcome them, and was the one hope of those liberals who dreamed of social and economic reform. The prime minister was quick to assert his new strength and humble his enemies. He took the post of Minister of War (renamed Defence) himself, appointed Qavām's nephew, General Vuṣūq, as his assistant, purged the upper ranks of the officer corps, transferred 15,000 soldiers to the gendarmerie, reduced the secret service allocations and cut the military budget by fifteen per cent.

Muṣaddiq demanded extraordinary emergency powers from the Majlis, initially granted for six months, then extended for another twelve, to enable him to balance the budget and initiate electoral, judicial and educational reforms. Using these special powers he decreed a land reform law which required landlords to forego 20% of their share of the crops grown on their land, of which half was to be restored to the cultivators, and half to be used for the establishment of rural banks to provide credit for farmers. This law did not address the larger issue of land being chiefly owned by a small number of great landowners, but it indicates the direction which Muṣaddiq's administration might have taken, but for his overthrow a year later. He also tackled another problem, the loopholes through which rich and influential men avoided payment of taxes, a matter of even greater urgency now that income from oil royalties had ceased. A new tax law was drafted which increased the tax liability of the wealthier classes. The Majlis, predictably, resisted such measures, which affected so many of its members, or their patrons. Faced with parliamentary intransigence, Muṣaddiq appealed to the people through a national referendum in July 1953 which gave him a massive vote of confidence.

He had not, however, forgotten that the ultimate enemy was the Shah himself. He appointed as Minister of Court Abuʾl-Qāsim Amīnī, a former member of Qavām's Democrat Party and the elder brother of his Finance Minister, ʿAlī Amīnī; he reduced the court budget, diverting the savings to the Ministry of Health; he brought the royal charities under government surveillance and transferred the estates acquired by Riẓā Shāh into the public domain. The Shah was prohibited from dealing directly with accredited diplomats, who had now to conduct their business with the Foreign Ministry. The Shah's twin sister, Ashraf, regarded as a person who encouraged his absolutist leanings and disregard for the Constitution, was sent into exile. As one historian wrote:

Iran, like many other Asian countries, appeared to be taking the road of republicanism, neutralism, and middle-class radicalism. Not since 1925 had so much power been concentrated in the office of prime minister and so little in the hands of the shah.[18]

Notwithstanding the tremendous pressures to which the Muṣaddiq government was subjected, its last year of life witnessed some solid achievements: irrigation projects were launched in the countryside; plans were initiated to improve agriculture; new factories were set up, and there was a modest increase in industrial production. There were also attempts at institutional change. As one historian has written, "... in the field of administrative, judicial, and other reforms, the record of the democratic government is ... impressive".[19] But the problems were also impressive. There was inflation, due partly to British punitive measures. The loss of oil revenue was serious. The conservative opposition and the threat of an army *coup* clouded the horizon, and fissures began to emerge within the National Front itself. Muṣaddiq was manifestly moving in a popularist direction, leading the Front from a position left of centre. No doubt his immense popularity with so many of his countrymen and his faith in the power of his oratory emboldened him to accept the risk of attempting genuinely radical reforms. He could not have been under any illusion about the hostility of his opponents: the court, great landlords, the very rich, and certain senior army officers. But his greatest problem lay with the National Front. As he tried to strengthen his grip on the administration and embark on a programme of reforms, the National Front began to disintegrate. An uneasy assortment of factions, its basic incompatibilities now came to the fore. The prime minister had the support of the progressive and liberal elements for his radical measures, but colleagues and allies of more traditional or conservative views became uneasy and prepared to abandon him. This was particularly true of his clerical allies, led in the Majlis by Āyatullāh Kāshānī and Shams Qanātābādī, who considered that the government's proposed measures smacked of atheism and Marxism, and were in contravention of the *Sharīʿa*. They found the secular outlook of a man like Ḥusain Fāṭimī, the Foreign Minister, or the anti-clerical past of Abūʾl-ʿAlī Luṭfī, the Minister of Justice, utterly abhorrent. Kāshānī was also alienated by Muṣaddiq's not admitting that the success of the anti-Qavām demonstrations had been largely due to his skilful orchestration, and not acknowledging the debt owed to him. But Kāshānī's alliance with Muṣaddiq had always been

[18] Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 274. For a summary account of Muṣaddiq's premiership, see *ibid*, pp. 267–80. Muṣaddiq still awaits a definitive biography, but see Zabih, *The Mossadegh Era* and Diba, *Mohammad Mossadegh.*

[19] Katouzian, *op. cit.*, p. 187; also pp. 182–5. For Katouzian's analysis of Muṣaddiq's failure, see *ibid*, pp. 164–82.

primarily tactical: initially, they had shared the same enemies and, for different reasons, similar goals.

As Muṣaddiq found himself increasingly alienated from the right wing of the National Front, he inevitably turned to the left for allies. This inexorably drew him closer to the Tūda Party, to which, during the early part of 1953, he seemed to grant the freedom of the streets. However, the support of the Tūda Party enabled his enemies to portray him as a pawn of the left. The British and, increasingly, the Americans had been saying this for some time. Kāshānī was uncomfortable at the prospect of being part of such an alliance, and it drew him nearer to the monarchist ᶜulamā, such as Āyatullāh Muḥammad Bihbahānī. Indeed, even Āyatullāh Āqā Ḥusain Burūjirdī, the supreme *Marjaᶜ-i Taqlīd* (Source of Emulation), who was opposed to clerical involvement in politics, was known to be worried by the direction events were taking.

Although during the last twelve months of his premiership Muṣaddiq seemed to be fully in control, his enemies were gathering, while his own inchoate political base was rapidly crumbling. The arrest of General Zāhidī in February 1953 for plotting to overthrow the government with foreign support should have alerted Muṣaddiq to imminent danger.[20] The General was soon released as a placatory gesture, but by then the conflict of prime minister and monarch had become the most important issue of the day. The 1906 Constitution required that both the civilian administration and the armed forces be immune to pressure from the throne. The Shah, as his subsequent actions demonstrated, was no more inclined than his father before him to let the Constitution stand in his way. But to subvert the constitutional government of the country, absolute control over the armed forces was essential. Both he and Muṣaddiq understood this. The contest for command of the army was fought out through the spring and summer of 1953. The prime minister's allies of the right had abandoned him; his allies of the left were behaving timorously and deviously; he possessed few supporters in the higher ranks of the services. Hence, he found himself almost singlehandedly facing the Shah and a network of conspiring generals, supported by most army units and fortified by foreign encouragement and funds. Still popular, still prime minister, he was a leader without a following to support him at local level. Kāshānī's supporters, who had acted on Muṣaddiq's behalf on 21 July 1952, were unavailable, and the masses whom the Tūda leaders were supposed to command failed to materialize. Even so, the first attempt at a royalist *coup* failed. On 16 August 1953, the Shah having

[20] Fażl-Allāh Zāhidī (1890–1963) entered the army in 1916. In the Second World War he was military governor of Iṣfahān until his pro-Nazi activities compelled the British to exile him. His arrest in 1942 by a British unit is described in McLean's *Eastern Approaches*, pp. 263–74.

withdrawn to the isolation of one of his Caspian residences, an attempt was made, by Colonel Niᶜmat-Allāh Nāṣirī, later the head of SAVAK, to dismiss Muṣaddiq by royal decree and replace him with General Zāhidī. The attempt failed due to the Chief of Staff, General Rīāḥī, one of Musaddiq's few supporters in the highest ranks of the army. On 17 August the Shah fled the country, first to Iraq and then to Italy. By 18 August, Muṣaddiq seemed to be in control of the situation but, concerned with the threat of a breakdown of public order or, as one version has it, to reassure the American ambassador that he was still in charge,[21] he ordered the army to clear the streets, thereby cutting himself off from the urban masses, ultimately his one sure support. The next day, 19 August, the conspirators launched a *coup d'état*, in the course of which the prime minister's house was attacked and looted, despite the brave resistance of his bodyguard. Two days later, Muṣaddiq, who had been taken to safety by his supporters, surrendered to the new régime. On 23 August, the Shah returned from Europe. A new chapter in the long history of Iranian despotism had begun.

The background and course of the *coup d'état* of August 1953 have been frequently recounted, usually from the point of view of the victors. The monarchist version played down the rôle of outside assistance, preferring to describe the events of 19 August as proof of the loyalty of most Iranians towards the throne, dutifully celebrated thereafter with a public holiday on every 28 Murdād, the date of the event according to the Iranian calendar. Opponents of the new order, on the other hand, stressed foreign support for the *coup* as the key factor in its success. The two countries allegedly involved, the United States and Great Britain, both officially denied involvement, preferring to give credit for the operation to the Shah's loyal officers, and thereby avoiding the opprobrium of having removed an elected prime minister. Nevertheless, Iranians have never had the slightest doubt that the C.I.A., acting on behalf of the American and British governments, organized the conspirators and paid the pro-Shah mobs led by toughs from southern Tehran which, together with army units, were in control of the streets by nightfall on 19 August. By 1982 this tenacious rumour had been fully confirmed and is now seen as incontrovertible.[22]

[21] Zabih, *op. cit.*, pp. 119–20.

[22] For royalist versions, see Pahlavi, *Mission for My Country*, pp. 99–110, and *Answer to History*, pp. 88–92; Ashraf Pahlavi, *op. cit.*, pp. 132–44; and Arfa, *op. cit.*, pp. 402–10. For early accounts of CIA involvement, see Harkness, "The Mysterious Doings of CIA"; Tully, *C.I.A. The Inside Story*; and Wise and Ross, *The Invisible Government*. Details of the operation were finally revealed by the chief American operative, Kermit Roosevelt, in his *Countercoup*, which also fully implicated the British, for whom see Woodhouse, *Something Ventured*. The British perspective on the 1953 *coup* is briefly described in Lapping, *End of Empire*, pp. 212–23 and 226. In his memoirs, Secretary of State Acheson commented on the official British position: "Never had so few lost so much so stupidly and so fast." Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, p. 503. The British had contemplated intervention in order to be rid of Muṣaddiq as early as 1951. See Louis, *op. cit.*, pp. 657–66.

Thus ended what appears, in retrospect, to have been Iran's last chance for the establishment of a liberal reformist government, functioning within a parliamentary constitution. Muṣaddiq's overthrow owed something to his personal errors of judgment as well as to the inherent failings of the National Front. It certainly provided the occasion for the establishment of an increasingly authoritarian régime which, in the end, could only be overthrown by revolution. For Iranians of all political persuasions, whether pro- or anti-Shah, the *coup* of 19 August 1953 confirmed a long-held conviction, that the source of all effective political action was to be sought in the machinations of foreigners. Inevitably, the Shah came to be seen as the puppet of Western, primarily American, interests, which had directly intervened to overthrow the legitimate government of Iran and to restore him to his throne in the pursuit of their own ends. If, two decades later, it seemed to some foreign observers that the Shah manipulated his American allies, the Iranian perception was very different.

FROM ZĀHIDĪ TO AMĪNĪ, 1953–62

The autocracy which characterized the years between 1963 and 1978 did not immediately come into being in the wake of the August 1953 *coup d'état*. That event was indubitably a royalist restoration, but the returning Shah did not at first command the lonely eminence to which he later laid claim. For the time being, he was a partner of those who had made possible his return, or who were committed to the political scenario implicit in his restoration: the military leaders who had engineered the *coup*; those landlords, entrepreneurs and clerics who had come to fear Muṣaddiq's potentially disruptive policies, and who had also feared a Tūda Party takeover; and the fickle Tehran mob headed by brutish hooligans. This partnership was led by the suave and ambitious General Zāhidī. Behind these indigenous elements were the foreigners. The Americans had made it all possible by co-ordinating and financing the conspirators, having come to appreciate the strategic significance of Iran for the Cold War, while the British had been the prime movers in the whole affair due to their hostility to Muṣaddiq and their anxiety for future access to Iranian oil. The Shah could not yet overshadow these diverse and formidable interest groups.

Zāhidī became prime minister. He was the inevitable choice, but while his cabinet and the new eighteenth Majlis reflected prevailing anti-Muṣaddiq sentiment, neither was composed exclusively of the Shah's placemen. The cabinet was sufficiently broad-based to include, as Minister of Finance, Dr ʿAlī Amīnī, who had served in the same office under Muṣaddiq, and who soon

distinguished himself in negotiating a speedy settlement of the oil problem. The Majlis elections, although obviously not "free", returned many former deputies with no particular court affiliation. Muṣaddiq's constitutional and nationalist ideals could not yet be completely disregarded. Not for a decade would cabinet and parliament be composed exclusively of the Shah's creatures.

As conciliator and restorer of order, Zāhidī proved shrewd, tough and pragmatic. The most pressing tasks of the new government were to restore economic confidence at home and abroad, to be achieved with the assistance of the United States, and to renew oil production through the agency of a consortium of international oil companies in which British Petroleum was to have a 40% interest. Local operations in Iran became the responsibility of the newly-created National Iranian Oil Company (N.I.O.C.).[23] The new government was also determined to root out supporters of the old régime and opponents of the new. In this last area, Zāhidī's approach predictably reflected a Cold War mentality. The new régime veered between harshness and comparative leniency towards the National Front and its supporters, punishments ranging from execution or imprisonment to house-arrest. The radical right suffered less, despite its record of collaboration with the Muṣaddiq government, because Āyatullāh Kāshānī and his supporters had distanced themselves from the former premier during the past months and seemed to support the monarchy. The radical left felt the full weight of royalist vengeance, although public repentence could earn pardon, eventual rehabilitation and even official preferment.[24] Opportunists came to terms easily enough, while some of the irreconcilable foes of the new order managed to escape into exile abroad.

The work of repression was carried out mainly by the martial law administration headed by Brigadier Tīmūr Bakhtiyār, later promoted to the rank of general, to become the first head of SAVAK (*Sāzmān-i Iṭṭilāʿāt va Amnīyat-i Kishvar*), the State Intelligence and Security Organization. There were also some vigilante outrages committed by non-official groups, inspired or tacitly approved of by the government. The reign of terror set a precedent for the future, especially with regard to the practice of military tribunals investigating "political" offences, an abuse which continued down to the last days of the monarchy.

The new government intended to make the exposure and humiliation of

[23] For further particulars, See Chapter 18, pp. 664–6.

[24] Pahlavi, *Mission for My Country*, p. 129, and Ashraf Pahlavi, *op. cit.*, p. 151. Abrahamian estimates that in the wake of the 1953 *coup*, the security forces executed forty [Tūda] party officials, tortured to death another fourteen, sentenced some two hundred to life imprisonment, and arrested over three thousand rank-and-file members. Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 280.

Muṣaddiq the centre-piece of these punitive measures. But it badly misjudged the effect of his show-trial. In open court, facing military prosecutors and obviously prejudiced judges, Muṣaddiq's courage, defiance and eloquence won him the admiration of even those who had never supported him. As prisoner in the dock, in a setting intended to degrade and demean him, he became the "lost leader" of later legend, whom the Shah might deride for his "negative nationalism", and foreign journalists mock for his histrionics, but who thereby acquired an abiding place in the hearts of the Iranian people and in the history of Iranian constitutionalism. Muṣaddiq's sentence of three years solitary confinement was followed by house-arrest on his estate until his death in 1967. Others were less fortunate. The former Foreign Minister, Ḥusain Fāṭimī, whose call for an end of the monarchy had aroused the rage of the Shah, was brutally assaulted at the time of his arrest, tried and executed; Abū'l-ʿAlī Luṭfī, former Minister of Justice, was murdered. Other National Front leaders were treated less severely, although for some years the National Front was a proscribed organization. Meanwhile, a modern police-state began to take shape. From this time, fear became second nature to the Iranian people, even to those who considered themselves above suspicion.

In foreign affairs, the government, while trying to avoid a client relationship with a single Great Power, seems to have recognized its dependence upon the United States. Naturally, it sought to develop other relationships, and there are indications that during this period the Shah toyed with the idea of playing off the Soviet Union against his American ally.[25] Even in these early years of Iranian–American collaboration, Muḥammad Riẓā Pahlavī seems to have resented the patron-client relationship implicit in accepting American assistance. Equally galling was the suspicion in his mind that the Americans perceived Zāhidī as a virtual king-maker and the real power behind the throne. What if they were to conclude that the able and ambitious premier might prove more reliable than the hitherto equivocal Shah? Nearly a decade later, the monarch's resentment towards another strong prime minister, Amīnī, was to be fuelled by American praise of one whom he regarded as a mere executor of the royal will. Throughout the reign, Muḥammad Riẓā Shāh remained acutely alert to the dangers of Ministers upstaging him. His preference was for men wholly dependent upon his favour, but who had the capacity to run a "modern" state.[26] As for Zāhidī, he had been well rewarded for his part in the restoration. He had attained the

[25] See Katouzian, *op. cit.*, pp. 198–201.

[26] On the Shah's contempt for the obsequious officials, whom he nevertheless seemed to prefer, see Fitzgerald, "Giving the Shah Everything He Wants", *Harper's Magazine*, November 1974, p. 70.

premiership, and his son had married Princess Shāhnāz, the Shah's daughter and only child by his first marriage. Nevertheless, the Shah continued to regard Zāhidī as a latent threat. In April 1955, therefore, under the pretext of concern for Zāhidī's allegedly failing health, he requested his resignation and ordered him to Switzerland for convalescence. It was to prove a terminal exile, serving notice to royal servants that they should not grow too great. At his departure from Mihrābād airport, Zāhidī is supposed to have said to his assembled friends, "Poor Dr Muṣaddiq was right after all!"[27]

The appointment of Ḥusain ʿAlā as Zāhidī's successor was intended as an interim measure, but lasted until April 1957. Meanwhile, the Shah was searching for a suitable way of implementing his two prime objectives; the concentration of all executive authority in his own person, and modernization, with the latter serving as a means by which to achieve acquiescence in the former. Thus, from the late 1950s, direct and attentive control and surveillance by the monarch over virtually every significant aspect of government became normative, and this continued until the end of the reign. Naturally, the intensity and perspicacity of the royal scrutiny fluctuated, but as a generalization, it can be said that the phrase, "*L'état, c'est moi*", accurately describes how the country was managed.

The Shah found his instrument in the person of Dr Manūchihr Iqbāl, who unashamedly described himself to the nineteenth Majlis as merely his master's voice.[28] The first in a series of courtier-politicians who, apart from Amīnī's brief incumbency of the premiership, headed successive governments during the last two decades of Pahlavī rule, Iqbāl held office for over three years (April 1957 to August 1960). While Iqbāl was prime minister, Iran conveyed to the outside world an impression of modest economic progress and apparent social stability, an impression which owed much to generous financial and military assistance by the United States, and to the elimination of virtually all opposition to the régime. From this time, censorship and the dread of attracting the attention of SAVAK created a climate of opinion in which conformity to the requirements of the régime and acquiescence in the *status quo* seemed the most obvious way to avoid trouble. The lively if often irresponsible political activities in which educated and articulate Iranians had indulged during the post-war years were curtailed in order not to provoke the curiosity of informers and *agents provocateurs* who were suspected of being in every office, café and classroom. Not surprisingly, the ambitions and appetites of the expanding middle class turned to the fulfilment of

[27] Quoted in Katouzian, *op. cit.*, p. 196.
[28] For an assessment of the premiership by a contemporary observer, see Avery, *op. cit.*, p. 470. For a *post-mortem* view, see Parsons, *The Pride and the Fall*, p. 57.

expectations of material gain, accompanied by a galloping consumerism and a thirst to acquire and display the artefacts and gadgetry taken to be evidence of Western "progress". As an ideology, the State carefully fostered a euphoric and complacent brand of nationalism in which the more recent Islamic centuries were overshadowed by the evocation of the glories of the Achaemenid and Sasanid eras, and which promised an even more glittering and materially rewarding future under the benign rule of the Shāhanshāh. Meanwhile, a sizeable number of urban Iranians, although still a minority even in the cities, were coming to acquire a stake in political stability and economic growth. This minority within a minority was willing to forgo constitutional rights (which perhaps had never meant much) for a place in the new Iran of the developers and the land-speculators, and, more especially, in Tehran, that concrete jungle of high-rise office-blocks and apartment-buildings, hemmed in by architecturally eclectic villas and supposedly American-style suburban residences, with their imported European furnishings. Evidence of the new order was manifested in construction-projects, new apartment blocks, motorways, international hotels, department stores and boutiques, and in the emerging new skyline which conveyed the illusion of a thoroughly westernized capital.

The insistence on emulating the West is easy to deride, but it can be understood as, in part, a mechanism for escaping from the reality of repression. Political energies were being channelled into desires for material improvement and higher standards of living. Thus, by the late 1950s, a small but growing minority was enjoying a more comfortable and secure life than it had ever known before. At the same time, expectations were being aroused, while few at the time perceived the cost involved in dislocation and alienation in the rapid changes which they were witnessing. Gradually, however, the sharply rising prices of basic commodities and urban rents, the cost of building-land and house-construction, the rumours of prodigious waste of public money, including foreign aid, and the general corruption commensurate with the opportunities for quick profits, which was said to penetrate deeply into the royal family, began to instil a widespread mood of anxiety and disillusion.

Thus the Iqbāl years saw both evidence of material progress and growing social tension, although the latter was at first ignored. Eventually, murmurs of discontent prompted the Shah to react with cosmetic changes: new faces in the cabinet, conciliatory speeches, promises of new developments. Such measures would merely dampen, but not eliminate unrest. The beginning of the 1960s was a testing time both for the Shah's increasingly rigorous exercise of personal government, and for the opponents of his régime. The crisis, when it came, was set off by the elections for the twentieth Majlis in the late spring of 1960. There

were signs that American attitudes towards Iran were veering in favour of increased liberalization. Accordingly, the Shah seems to have concluded that it would be expedient to organize a two-party system in parliament, possibly as a genuine experiment with democracy, but also as window-dressing. The two parties thus willed into existence were the *Ḥizb-i Millī* (National Party) and, in May 1957, the opposition *Ḥizb-i Mardum* (People's Party), headed respectively by Iqbāl and by Asad-Allāh ʿAlam, a close confidant of the Shah who was to play a major rôle in Iranian public life until shortly before his death in 1977. In addition to candidates put forward by these two parties, some independent candidates, including former members of the National Front, were permitted to stand for election. Considerable opposition to the Iqbāl government was expressed during the campaign period. Particularly hard-hitting were the speeches of Dr ʿAlī Amīnī. His economist's training and experience in the Cabinets of both Muṣaddiq and Zāhidī gave weight to his words. He had recently served as Iran's ambassador to the United States, but had been recalled in 1958, for alleged involvement in plotting against the Shah's government. He had, however, favourably impressed those in Washington who were anxious about the course of events in Iran and who believed that vigorous reform from above, particularly land-reform, was the panacea for the country's ills.

The months immediately preceding the elections of 1960 saw a sharp rise in the political consciousness of people who, since 1953, had been cowed by censorship and the fear of General Bakhtiyār's secret police. This reawakening of widespread political consciousness had certainly not been the intention of the government when it revived party politics. When the results of the voting were finally announced, it became obvious that the whole process had been rigged. The two official parties had neatly distributed the seats between them. Public expectations had been sufficiently aroused for these results to produce an indignant outcry. The Shah promptly voiced displeasure at the way the elections had been conducted. The resignation of the newly-elected deputies and the Iqbāl cabinet followed. Iqbāl was replaced by Jaʿfar Sharīf-Imāmī.[29]

The new cabinet, which assumed office in September 1960, faced a very difficult situation. The country was in an economic crisis. Foreign exchange reserves were falling, and clearly austerity measures were needed to restrict domestic credit, impose foreign exchange controls, and curb inessential imports. Inflation was hurting all but the profiteers. Anger against speculators and the extravagant *nouveaux riches* extended to members of the royal family. Foreign commentators, especially in the United States, stressed the dangers of Iran being

[29] For the Shah's choice of Sharīf-Imāmī as prime minister in August 1960, see Cottam, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

unable to solve its internal difficulties. Glaring corruption, the misuse of foreign aid, and the "feudal" land-system in the countryside seemed to provide fertile soil for communism. Inside Iran, the scandal of the elections focused attention on political remedies. Sharīf-Imāmī's first task was to prepare for fresh elections for the twentieth Majlis, but when it eventually met early in 1961 in an atmosphere of anticipation, it was still far from being a truly representative assembly. The *Ḥizb-i Millī* had sixty-nine seats, the *Ḥizb-i Mardum* sixty-four, but there were also thirty-two independents whose presence, it was hoped, would restore some vestige of genuine debate to the Majlis. Among the latter was Allāhyār Ṣāliḥ, formerly Muṣaddiq's ambassador in Washington, as deputy for Kāshān and parliamentary spokesman for the National Front, which, although no longer proscribed, continued to endure official harassment. Many of its leaders had suffered imprisonment or exile, or had withdrawn from public life in the eight years since the *coup d'état* of 1953. However, between 1961 and 1963, there was a relaxation of the pressure applied to political opposition groups, and the National Front re-formed around figures like Karīm Sanjābī and Daryūsh Furūhar, as well as younger men such as Shāhpūr Bakhtiyār. They waited in the vain hope that, as the crisis deepened, the palace would summon them. More significant than the new National Front in the support which they drew from some professional people and students, were two leading members of the newly-founded *Nahẓat-i Āẓādī-yi Īrān* (Liberation Movement of Iran), the French-educated engineer, Mahdī Bāzargān, and the cleric, Sayyid Maḥmūd Ṭālaqānī. Both advocated a radical Islamic socialism and were fearless in their criticism of the régime.

Had the Shah felt free to act, he would probably have swiftly silenced the disruptive debate on the central issues of Iranian political life which had developed since the fiasco of the 1960 elections. He had, however, to consider his American friends. John F. Kennedy had been inaugurated as the new President of the United States in January 1961, and sentiment in Washington was running in favour of more democracy and reform in Iran. Thus there could be no return to the autocratic style of the Zāhidī period. The choice seemed to lie between a National Front administration or one headed by Dr ʿAlī Amīnī. As the former was unacceptable to the Shah, he chose the latter as the lesser evil.

Amīnī was the third and last of the post-war prime ministers who might have initiated reforms within the constitutional framework which the Pahlavīs had systematically undermined in their pursuit of absolute power.[30] But he was not

[30] Born in 1905, Dr ʿAlī Amīnī was educated at the Sorbonne and served his political apprenticeship in the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Finance before becoming Director-General of Customs in 1939.

to be allowed the opportunity to undertake the task for which he was so well equipped. The Shah, by all accounts, had long distrusted this former protégé of Qavām and former colleague of Muṣaddiq, this aristocrat with radical views, able, ambitious and outspoken, who was a grandson of both Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh and Amīn al-Daula. He had served his political apprenticeship in the days of Qavām's ascendancy, and had been very close to him. He had held office in Muṣaddiq's government as Minister of Finance (1951–2), and had displayed both the political sophistication and the personal charm to maintain open communication with men at opposing ends of the political spectrum. Such had been his reputation that, after Muṣaddiq's fall, Zāhidī had turned to him to settle the dispute with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and negotiate the establishment of the Consortium and the National Iranian Oil Company. Between 1956 and 1958 he had served as Iranian ambassador in Washington and had won the confidence of the Americans, a fact his sovereign could not ignore. Undoubtedly, the United States exerted pressure to have Amīnī appointed premier.[31] The Shah yielded, but seems to have determined to be rid of him as soon as possible.[32]

Ironically, it should have been possible for the Shah to have developed a constructive partnership with his new prime minister. Amīnī possessed, from the monarch's point of view, several real assets. He enjoyed the confidence of the Americans, his appointment was seen as unexceptionable and many educated Iranians held him in high esteem, while there was not attributed to him either Qavām's high-reaching ambitions or Muṣaddiq's unswerving hatred of the Pahlavīs. However, it was to his detriment that he lacked the support of any kind of political organization, and he was not widely known to the public at large. Furthermore, like all politicians who were not part of the inner circle of the court, he had enemies in high places, ready to take advantage of the Shah's known dislike of him. His one trump-card was the assumed goodwill of the Americans.

AMĪNĪ AS PRIME MINISTER, 1961–2: THE LAST CHANCE

Without the Shah's support, Amīnī's government was bound to fail, but its brief tenure is of special interest, for it can be argued that this was the country's last chance of evolving along the path laid down by the Constitutionalists of the early 20th century, and within the institutional framework in which Qavām and Muṣaddiq had endeavoured to govern. Amīnī, like Muṣaddiq, recognized that

[31] See Pahlavi, *Answer to History*, p. 23. [32] See *ibid*, pp. 146–47.

the inherent divisiveness and irresponsibility of the Majlis called for strong remedies, if his ambitious programmes were to have any chance of success. There was, however, a world of difference between his desire temporarily to curtail parliamentary factionalism by substituting a brief period of government by decree, and the determination of both Pahlavī rulers to emasculate the Constitution in their pursuit of absolute authority.

On the eve of assuming office, Amīnī must have had no illusions as to the difficulties confronting the new government. He was fully aware of the dangers of inflation, high prices, the unfavourable balance of payments, and the weak infrastructure of the economy. But throughout the weeks which had preceded the fall of both the Iqbāl and the Sharīf-Imāmī governments, debate had centred upon political ills and the necessity for political remedies. Amīnī himself had publicly condemned the two recent elections and the electoral law which allowed them to be rigged, and it had been widely assumed that, were the Shah to appoint him the new prime minister, he would insist upon the dissolution of the present Majlis, to be followed by new elections under a revised electoral law. Some assumed that a slight alteration of the Constitution to obtain a more representative assembly would miraculously solve the country's problems.

This, however, ignored that fact that loopholes and abuses in the parliamentary system were not the only reasons for growing public frustration and anger. The Majlis was not the only target of sustained criticism. Resentment was also directed towards the bureaucracy, inept and bloated; towards the entrepreneurs, grown rich with government contacts; and, *sotto voce*, towards the pampered officer corps and the court. There was a ground-swell of indignation at what was perceived to be ubiquitous corruption and profiteering in high places. The demand was for reform at all levels, especially land-reform. There was also being aired opposition towards the blatant pro-Western slant of the country's foreign policy, together with calls for Third-World neutralism. But the issue which had been the direct cause of the downfall of the Sharīf-Imāmī government had been a Tehran teachers' strike which had culminated in a demonstration in front of the Majlis during which security forces had shot two demonstrators. Ending the strike, therefore, had to be the new government's highest priority. The teachers' leader, Muḥammad Darakhshish, a former supporter of Muṣaddiq and a parliamentary deputy, was understood to be willing to work with the new administration.

Amīnī understood the situation very well, but his forceful articulation of the need for radical solutions necessarily exposed him to two dangers. The first was the risk of arousing expectations which could not be satisfied. The second was

that implementation of his programme would provoke bitter hostility among landlords and entrepreneurs, who could expect to suffer from such measures as land-reform and increasingly efficient tax-collection. *The Times* of London commented that Amīnī's first broadcast was

> so forceful and sweeping that unless he quickly follows it up with remedial action he may have only armed the critics with arguments to fire back at him . . . His long description of the "plague" besetting the country, due to widespread corruption, misuse of governmental positions, wastage of capital, and flouting of financial regulations, led him to a bleak conclusion. "Our financial and economic projects are at their last breath."[33]

Unrealistic hopes led to disappointment, and the initial announcement of the composition of the Amīnī cabinet produced an anticlimax. Several of the appointments won general approval, a few were virtually unknown, while four Ministers were retained from the discredited previous administration, and all in important posts: Foreign Affairs, War, the Interior and Commerce. These reappointments may have been made at the behest of the Shah. One outstanding appointment was that of Dr Ḥasan Arsanjānī as Minister of Agriculture. A former National Front member and reformer of great energy and ability, he moved into prominence as the spokesman for the prime minister, and as unofficial deputy leader. In time, the visibility which he acquired as architect of the land reforms provoked the envy of his sovereign, who, himself determined to assume the rôle of emancipator of the peasantry, forced this distinguished politican out of office and into exile. Another appointment which caused surprise was that of Nūr al-Dīn Alamūtī as Minister of Justice. A judge with a radical past, having been a member of the Tūda Party between 1941 and 1945, before drawing close to Qavām, it was said that the Shah detested him.[34] The Education Ministry went to Darakhshish, an appointment indicative of the priority which Amīnī gave to educational reform.

As soon as the cabinet was appointed Amīnī took firm control. Political demonstrations were banned in the interest of public order, while the Shah announced the dissolution of the Majlis and ordered new elections under a revised electoral law. Despite some disappointment at the composition of the cabinet, the public sensed that the new government meant business, and apparently enjoyed the support of the Shah. There was an atmosphere of expectancy and some evidence of political debate in the press and amongst the public. Despite the *coup* of 1953 and the events which followed it, neither government censorship nor SAVAK had yet silenced completely the political voice of the capital.

[33] *The Times* (London), 10 May 1961.

[34] Katouzian, *op. cit.*, pp. 215–16 and 231, n. 2.

The new government quickly settled the teachers' pay dispute, and the schools reopened. Amīnī then announced a far-reaching fifteen-point programme. Proposed reforms included the break-up of great estates, reduced government spending, new tax laws with improved enforcement, a balance between imports and exports, curbs on the import of luxury goods, greater decentralization of the bureaucracy and a degree of local autonomy, reduced inflation, improved education, and strong anti-corruption measures. It was a diverse programme, and pessimists suggested that no government could expect to achieve success on so broad a front. The anti-corruption drive attracted much public attention. Four generals were arrested on charges of embezzlement, interference in elections and accumulating private fortunes from public funds.[35] Ten senior officials in the Ministry of Justice were dismissed, and the Prosecutor-General announced that his office would examine the dossiers of all members of the electoral councils of the last two elections, with a view to prosecuting cases of gerrymandering or vote-rigging.

In Iran, anti-corruption drives invariably evoke scepticism. Public opinion typically takes it for granted that the wrong men or low-level scapegoats will be held to account, while the real culprits and those with influence will escape. However, in the present instance, Amīnī's strong line and the ensuing arrests were taken seriously enough to cause restlessness within the officer corps at what was taken to be a traducement of the army's honour. Arsanjānī, as government spokesman, publicly denied rumours of unrest in the armed services. He declared that most officers were honourable and patriotic: rumours to the contrary were inspired by a minority who dreaded exposure, and were encouraged by landlords opposed to the government's policies. He also reaffirmed that the government must either pursue its policy of introducing peaceful but drastic land reform now, or face bloody revolution later. The speech, however, was a reminder that the government was treading a very thin line, hoping to introduce radical changes while trying to avoid intervention by the army or the Shah in favour of the *status quo*.

As for the new government's foreign policy, the beneficiaries of the 1953 *coup* were committed to ties with the West, especially the United States. Those

[35] They were ʿAlavī Moghaddam, former Minister of the Interior and Chief of Police; ʿAlī Akbar Zargām, former Minister of Finance; Ḥājj ʿAlī Kiyā, former head of Armed Forces Intelligence; and Rūḥ-Allāh Navīsī, head of the Fisheries Department. The government went out of its way, however, to assuage potential outrage among members of the officer corps by stressing that the charges related to exclusively non-service matters.

defeated in 1953, the supporters of the National Front and the now-outlawed Tūda Party, favoured neutralism. Amīnī was widely regarded as a protégé of the United States, but his cabinet included men of National Front or left-wing antecedents, who were presumed to favour non-alignment and disengagement from the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) into which the Shah had led Iran in October 1955. Amīnī reaffirmed Iran's commitment to CENTO but admitted favouring improved relations with the U.S.S.R. Nevertheless, a shift of direction in foreign policy was highly unlikely. The prime minister was well-disposed towards the United States and securing substantial American aid in the current economic crisis was a matter of urgency. Moreover, it was clear that the Shah would not tolerate a shift in alliances. To that extent, the international scene was the least of Amīnī's concerns.

More urgent was the need to impress upon the public the seriousness of the economic situation, and thereby to obtain acquiescence in a programme of austerity. Amīnī's well publicized austerity-drive centred upon stricter import controls on consumer goods, which, it was reckoned, would produce an improvement in the balance of payments of twenty million pounds sterling in three months. Restrictions on foreign travel and the abolition of exchange allowances to parents educating their children abroad were of more cosmetic value. Apart from saving foreign currency, these measures were meant to show the world the government's determination. This was essential, since it was estimated that the economy required some thirty to forty million dollars, presumably from the United States, and further credit from the International Monetary Fund, in order to emerge from the crisis.

The government introduced various economy measures. Darakhshish's reorganization of the Ministry of Education brought an annual saving of around £1,500,000, while many abuses were discovered and publicized. These would not have surprised the average Iranian, generally extremely cynical about the running of the country, but the publicity given to corruption and the government's attempts to curb it seemed to promise a fresh start.

Those affected by these activities, or threatened by major changes, could do little to attack a still popular administration, but they intrigued against it whenever possible. However, strident criticism was also voiced by members of the National Front, some of whose ideas had been adopted by the Amīnī government. Thus, during this relatively liberal interlude of 1961–2, the National Front constantly berated the government for its slowness to fulfil its promises and its lack of constitutionality, demanding immediate elections.

This call for elections exposed the government's Achilles' heel. Amīnī was vulnerable to the charge that, unlike Iqbāl or Sharīf-Imāmī, he lacked even the pretence of a parliamentary mandate. He was not insensitive to his anomalous situation. He asked the Shah to authorize elections for a new Majlis and expressed the hope that a new Assembly would be convened within six months. This short space of time was not, however, sufficient for the passing of a new electoral law. Amīnī found himself trapped. On the one hand, the Constitution required that parliament be reconvened within three months of dissolution. On the other, he knew that while a reformed assembly was needed to achieve his legislative goals, a change in the electoral law required parliamentary ratification, which was only possible when parliament was in session. Faced with this dilemma, he settled for the appointment of a panel of jurists to recommend ways of reforming the existing electoral system. Amīnī was not disloyal to the Constitution: his entire career had shown his commitment to it. But until the composition of the Majlis could be changed, it would not support his bold and controversial proposals, while to continue ruling by decree was to be prime minister at the Shah's pleasure. Misrepresented either as a prime minister turned autocrat in disregard of the Constitution, or as the Shah's lackey, this man of vision found himself increasingly hamstrung. Even so, he might have survived much longer but for his very success in initiating land-reform and for his determination to prune the military budget.

By the early 1960s, there were few, other than conservatives, who did not consider that some form of land reform would offer a national panacea. Foreigners had been saying so for some time, and it was widely believed that the Kennedy White House saw land reform as a *sine qua non* for progress. The Shah favoured it for the political benefits which might accrue to him as a royal reformer, freed from the constraints of having to consider landlord interests. No politician or observer could ignore the issue. Amīnī had no wish to do so. He was in favour of far-reaching reforms, although he seems to have seen these as long-term social goals rather than as the eye-catching expedients advocated by royal advisers. Arsanjānī's position resembled the prime minister's: he wanted radical change, but knew that mismanaged reforms might prove worse than useless.

It was clear that action of any kind could prove a Pandora's Box. Practically every Third World government which had attempted land reform had discovered that the consequences differed from the original intention. What appeared straightforward as a blueprint had proved otherwise in practice. To be successful, cautious planning and skilled implementation were essential. Arsanjānī

seems to have understood this, but had to act under the gaze of the national and international press and the scrutiny of a monarch who desired the introduction of programmes which would bring about profound changes without threatening political destabilization, while enhancing the image of the ruler as a progressive dedicated to his people. The Shah had to ensure that neither Amīnī nor Arsanjānī acquired the popularity which he sought for the throne. For his ministers, it was not an easy assignment.

By 1961, the crown lands had been largely distributed to individuals who were given twenty-five years to pay for them, interest-free, at approximately one-third of the current market value. Attention now shifted to government lands already leased out to individual farmers or left uncultivated, and to large estates still privately owned. The question of their distribution provoked heated debate. In the first month of its existence, the Amīnī government had decreed limitations upon the size of individual holdings, a measure denounced as unconstitutional and un-Islamic by Āyatullāh Burūjirdī. Undeterred, the government continued on its course and by January 1962 had proclaimed the first decree defining the nature of the land reform. Predictably criticized by right and left, especially galling were the arguments of those who maintained that a measure of such importance for the country's future should have been introduced by parliamentary legislation, and not by royal decree, the direct consequence of there being no Majlis in session. The National Front was particularly vociferous in its attacks upon the government, seeming to favour speedy land-reform in principle, but making no substantial proposals as alternatives to the government's programmes.

Indeed, the National Front's response to the government's policies went far beyond disagreement about how land-reform should be implemented. A rough-and-ready appraisal of the political situation in 1962 revealed two significant political groupings: the implicit alliance of court, conservatives and army under the Shah; and what popular support the National Front could muster. If the prime minister was not to appear the mere instrument of the Shah, he needed the tacit endorsement of the National Front. The composition of the cabinet suggests that Amīnī attempted to obtain this, but the Front grew more hostile, either because its leaders did not trust Amīnī, seeing him as an American hireling unlikely to pursue a non-aligned foreign policy, or as one whose political fortunes depended upon the Shah. National Front opposition became overt and indirectly contributed to Amīnī's eventual downfall, confirming exactly what the Shah wanted to know and what Amīnī's American supporters had to accept: that the prime minister was politically isolated, and therefore expendable.

The land-reform decree of January 1962 had fulfilled the Amīnī government's historical mission by inaugurating an agrarian revolution of a kind, but the end was very near. That month a student demonstration at Tehran University, inspired by National Front opposition to the government, was crushed by the army with extreme barbarity. Amīnī disclaimed all prior knowledge of the decision to use such force against the students, which left either the Shah himself or General Bakhtiyār, the head of SAVAK, as the instigator of this atrocity. If the Shah had been responsible, then the prime minister, by disassociating himself from the decision, was, by implication, laying the blame at the Shah's door. If, on the other hand, Bakhtiyār had acted alone, it would mean that he was acting as a *provocateur*, seeking to be rid of the prime minister in order to take his place. Amīnī demanded Bakhtiyār's removal and exile. The Shah, not yet ready to dispose of his prime minister and perhaps fearful that the head of SAVAK would become uncontrollable, dismissed Bakhtiyār. This act restored to Amīnī some of the lustre lost in the previous months. The Shah also gained by showing that he could control even the strongest of his officials. But the inherent conflict of interest between Amīnī, with his programme of reform, and Muḥammad Riẓā Shāh, with his concern for the future of the monarchy, was reaching a climax. The economy was still faltering, and Amīnī continued to insist upon austerity and cut-backs in government spending. He even demanded massive reductions in the army allocations. This, the Shah would not tolerate. Amīnī therefore resigned in July, complaining of insufficient American financial aid. He may have believed that in a conflict with the Shah over the running of the country, he could rely upon American support. In this he was wrong. Given the course of events, the Americans preferred to stay with what appeared to be the one fixed point in the bewildering Iranian firmament, the Shah himself.

From the resignation of Amīnī until the disintegration of the monarchy in 1978, Muḥammad Riẓā Shāh was more than ever the absolute ruler of the country. With Amīnī out of the way, the Shah could now assume the appealing rôle of royal reformer, and the architect of what he was pleased to term "The White Revolution." There was to be a calculated temporary cooling of relations with the United States, while the Soviet Union was wooed in the hope of reducing the barrage of hostile propaganda broadcast towards Tehran. To project the image of emancipator of the peasantry from feudal bondage, the Shah retained Arsanjānī for another year. He wished to preserve the appearance of continuity, even though the land reform programme was about to be harnessed to his political objectives, and thereby emasculated. A new prime minister was already waiting in the wings, Asad-Allāh ʿAlam, a longtime

confidant and a courtier. After Amīnī, there were to be no more challenges from the political establishment.

HEIR OF THE ACHAEMENIDS, 1962–77

By the summer of 1962, the Shah had reigned for twenty years. He had survived assassination attempts, the plots of his enemies, flight abroad during the 1953 *coup*, a pervasive undercurrent of anti-royalist sentiment, and the hostility of his Soviet neighbours. His survival had been chiefly due to American support. As an opportunist, he now proceeded with his plans for his so-called "White Revolution", a grand design intended to make him the ultimate beneficiary of both his people's longing for material improvement and of the American conviction that reforms were essential if further modernization were to be achieved. He therefore promulgated a six-point reform programme such as had originally been drafted by Amīnī in 1961, and submitted it to a national plebiscite in January 1963. Apart from land reform, already in operation, the other five points were: the sale of government-owned factories to provide additional funding for buying out great landlords; profit-sharing in industry; the nationalization of forests; a new electoral law, including the enfranchisement of women; and the creation of a Literacy Corps, intended to take elementary education into the rural areas not hitherto adequately reached by the existing system of state education. Predictably, being government-sponsored, the plebiscite was overwhelmingly affirmative. In view, however, of the government's claim that the result was a vote of confidence in the Shah's policies, it was embarrassing that massive anti-plebiscite demonstrations and riots took place. The government derided this opposition as "black reaction", the work of a handful of reactionary clerics opposed to the extension of women's rights and the prospect of losing *vaqf* income. The opposition was in fact much broader than either the government admitted or foreign observers realized. It objected not so much to reform as to the way in which the Shah was using the widespread desire for social amelioration to legitimize his autocracy.

The new National Front chose to boycott the plebiscite: it considered that such important measures should be ratified by the Majlis. Its actions, however, were of little importance, for its leaders were soon afterwards imprisoned, thereby revealing their political impotence. From this time, the National Front was of only marginal significance as a political force. But one group, formerly linked with the National Front, remained vigorous. This was the *Nahẓat-i Āzādī-yi Īrān* (Liberation Movement of Iran) founded by the deeply religious

layman, Mahdī Bāzargān,[36] and the progressive cleric, Sayyid Maḥmūd Ṭalaqānī.[37]

Significant opposition to the White Revolution came not from the National Front, but from a broad-based alliance of the discontented. In June 1963, "thousands of shopkeepers, clergymen, office employees, teachers, students, wage earners, and unemployed workers poured into the streets to denounce the Shah".[38] These demonstrations lasted three days, occurring in Tehran and all major provincial towns. They were ferociously suppressed and the government held firm: there was no general strike, no disruption in the oil fields, no unrest among the armed services. The number of dead is still uncertain, and many more were imprisoned and tortured. Henceforth, naked force ruthlessly stamped out all opposition, while the Shah continued to pursue his grandiose schemes. After 1963, it seemed that only revolution could end the systematic violence so freely indulged in by the régime.

In the protests of 1963, the religious authorities emerged for the first time in Muḥammad Riẓā Shāh's reign as the leaders of a broad alliance of opponents of the régime. Some clerical spokesmen were already well-known opponents of despotism and advocates of an Islam which combined progressive and socialist ideals with traditional religious and ethical values. Chief among these were Ṭālaqānī and Āyatullāh Sayyid Abū'l-Faẓl Mūsavī Zanjānī from Āẕarbāījān, who had been a supporter of Muṣaddiq. Others, such as Āyatullāh Muḥammad Hādī Mīlānī and Āyatullāh Sayyid Muḥammad Kāẓim Sharīʿatmadārī, eschewed politics but were concerned at the Shah's disregard for the Constitution, the revival of militaristic attitudes characteristic of the worst years of Riẓā Shāh's despotism, and the brutal repression committed by the régime. Even political

[36] Mahdī Bāzargān (1906–), a merchant's son from Āẕarbāījān, was trained in Paris as a civil engineer and became a teacher in the Tehran College of Science and Technology. He did not become politically active until after Riẓā Shāh's abdication. In October 1941, he founded the Engineers' Association and participated in the establishment of the *Ḥiẕb-i Irān* (Iran Party).

[37] Sayyid Maḥmūd Ṭālaqānī (1910–79) was the son of a cleric who had supported the Constitution and had suffered for his opposition to Riẓā Shāh. During the early 1930s, the son studied at the Faiẓīya *madrasa* and between 1938 and 1940 worked as a secondary-school teacher in Tehran. In 1940, he was given the first of many jail sentences for criticizing the régime. Between 1949 and 1953 he was an ardent supporter of Muṣaddiq, and when Kāshānī and other clerical supporters of the prime minister abandoned him in 1953, Ṭālaqānī remained loyal. Forced to withdraw from active politics after the *coup*, he wrote two influential tracts, maintaining that Shiʿism was irreconcilable with despotism because its nature was essentially democratic, and that Islam and socialism were not incompatible, since God had not created the world for it to be polarized between "haves" and "have nots". Among leading clerics, Ṭālaqānī's following was especially strong among the urban poor and the young, and his writings were much read and admired by the *Mujāhidīn-i Khalq* and their supporters. Just prior to his death (9 September 1979) he had polled the greatest number of votes in the elections for the *Majlis-i Khibragān* (Assembly of Experts).

[38] Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, p. 424.

conservatives such as Āyatullāh Muḥammad Bihbahānī and Āyatullāh ᶜAbd-Allāh Chilsutūnī seem to have felt disquiet at the direction events were taking. More imposing than any of these, however, as an opposition leader of national stature was the charismatic Rūḥ-Allāh Khumainī.

Born in 1902, and now sixty-one, he came from a modest landowning and clerical family from Khumain, not far from Gulpāygān. Educated at Arāk and Qum, he taught at the Faiżiya *madrasa* in the latter city, establishing close links with Āyatullāh Burūjirdī, the current Marjaᶜ-i Taqlīd. During the Muṣaddiq years, when Āyatullāh Kāshānī dominated clerical politics, Khumainī seems to have maintained an apolitical posture. He was presumably unsympathetic to Muṣaddiq's secular aims for Iran, probably considering that the premier leaned excessively towards the Tūda Party; but more importantly, his links with the quietist Burūjirdī must have restrained him from active participation in politics. But after Burūjirdī's death in 1962, that constraint was removed. Thereafter, he became an outspoken critic of the régime, fiercely denouncing the fraudulent referendum of January 1963. The government retaliated with a brutal assault by paratroopers on the Faiżiya madrasa, killing a number of students and ransacking the building. This punitive action, the claims made for the White Revolution, the government's dependence upon the United States, and its support for Israel provided Khumainī with grounds for a broad-fronted attack upon the régime. The government, loud in its denunciation of the "black reaction" of the clergy, had dubbed both ᶜulamā and theological students as parasites. On 3 June 1963, Khumainī replied:

Now, these students of the religious sciences who spend the best and most active part of their lives in these narrow cells, and whose monthly income is somewhere between 40 and 100 tumans – are they parasites? And those to whom one source of income alone brings hundreds of millions of tumans are not parasites? Are the ᶜ*ulamā* parasites – people like the late Ḥajj Shaykh ᶜAbd al-Karīm, whose sons had nothing to eat on the night that he died; or the late Burūjirdī, who was 600,000 tumans in debt when he departed from this world? And those who have filled foreign banks with the wealth produced by the toil of our poverty-stricken people, who have erected towering palaces but still will not leave the people in peace, wishing to fill their own pockets and those of Israel with our resources – they are not parasites? Let the world judge, let the nation judge who the parasites are![39]

[39] Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, p. 178. After the March 1963 attack upon the Faiżīya, the Shah went to Qum, where he denounced the religious authorities as "Black reactionaries" and as "Sodomites and agents of the British". The four senior Āyatullāhs in Qum, Gulpāygānī, Khumainī, Marᶜashī al-Najafī and Sharīᶜatmadārī then protested this defamation of the ᶜulamā, as did Āyatullāh Mīlānī and Āyatullāh Ṭabāṭabāʾī-yi Qummī in Mashhad. Mīlanī commented subsequently, "The son was like the father . . . Only he was more vulgar and lacked the moral courage of Reza Shah." Quoted in Taheri, *The Spirit of Allah*, p. 136.

This was extraordinarily courageous, and it was for such courage that Khumainī won nationwide adulation. Many had thought the same way: only he dared to utter the words.

The day after he made this speech, Khumainī was arrested and taken to Tehran. He was released in August 1963, and the government announced that he and other leading clerical opponents had agreed to abstain from further political activities. Denying the existence of this agreement, Khumainī proceeded to urge a boycott of the elections scheduled for October 1963. He was again imprisoned, and not released until May 1964, but by then his name had become a household word. In October, a public issue arose which was perfectly suited to engaging him in a cause with which the majority of Iranians could identify. Two government bills were before the Majlis. One concerned a two-hundred million dollar loan from the United States to purchase military equipment from that country. The other, obviously linked to it, extended diplomatic immunity to all American military and technical personnel and their families in Iran. On 27 October 1964, Khumainī attacked these bills before a crowd assembled in front of his house in Qum. In the course of his speech, he said,

> If some American's servant, some American's cook, assassinates your *marja*ᶜ in the middle of the bazaar, or runs over him, the Iranian police do not have the right to apprehend him! Iranian courts do not have the right to judge him! The dossier must be sent to America, so that our masters there can decide what is to be done! [. . .] They have reduced the Iranian people to a level lower than that of an American dog. If someone runs over a dog belonging to an American, he will be prosecuted. Even if the Shah himself were to run over a dog belonging to an American, he would be prosecuted. But if an American cook runs over the Shah, the head of state, no one will have the right to interfere with him.
>
> Why? Because they wanted a loan and America demanded this in return [. . .] Iran has sold itself to obtain these dollars. The government has sold our independence, reduced us to the level of a colony, and made the Muslim nation of Iran appear more backward than savages in the eyes of the world![40]

Arrest swiftly followed, and on 4 November 1964, he was exiled to Turkey. He was subsequently permitted to go to Najaf in Iraq, which, as the Iranian government might have foreseen, was an ideal residence for a clerical opponent of the régime. The Shīᶜī shrine-cities of Iraq had a history of sheltering ᶜulamā opposed to tyrannical Shahs. Najaf, with its large Shīᶜī population, regularly reinforced by numbers of pilgrims from Iran, provided Khumainī with a ready

[40] Khomeini, *op. cit.*, pp. 181–2.

audience for his sermons, and with agents at hand to smuggle pamphlets and cassette-recordings into Iran.

But in Tehran, in the mood of euphoria which followed the inauguration of the White Revolution, what was regarded as the demagoguery of a turbulent cleric did not disturb the complacency of either senior government officials or foreign observers. The Shah considered that his policies were winning the approbation of hitherto sceptical supporters abroad. At home, opposition was silenced by force and drowned in a flood of official propaganda. The Shah had surrounded himself with men whom he could trust to obey him. While the prime minister, ʿAlam, kept the low profile befitting a royal servant, the monarch's self-confidence and arrogance increased visibly. Meanwhile, foreign capital flowed in, responding to international press reports of the success of land reform and foreign assessments of Iran's capacity to equip itself for the 21st century. The international Press carried photographs of His Imperial Majesty opening a new dam or a new highway, inspecting an agricultural research institute, or trying out new pieces of military equipment. Foreigners, mainly American, were commissioned to submit plans for rapid modernization. Advisers and experts crowded into the country. Their presence drove up rents and servants' wages, and their salaries provoked envy. By the late 1970s, they were numbered in thousands. Imported consumer goods also poured in, to the pecuniary advantage of customs personnel and retailers. The latter sold them at prices many times their value in their country of origin. Fortunes were being made, especially in imports, urban real estate, and the construction industry. Everyone who could afford it, and many who could not, aspired to live in suburban affluence.

Exhilarated by his self-perception as a royal modernizer, Muḥammad Riżā Shāh now decided to revive the system of official political parties competing for favour, despite the fact that his earlier attempts had not proved conspicuously successful. Hence, the *Ḥizb-i Īrān-i Novīn* (New Iran Party) was formed, supposedly as the voice of a new pro-western generation of technocratic politicians. The *Ḥizb-i Mardum* was retained as its sparring-partner. ʿAlam resigned as premier early in 1964 but remained close to the Shah as Minister of Court. He was replaced by the leader of the *Ḥizb-i Īrān-i Novīn*, Ḥasan ʿAli Manṣūr, young, personable and articulate, but his tenure of office (March 1964–January 1965) was to prove brief. He was assassinated by a member of a group apparently linked with the outlawed *Fidāʾiyān-i Islām*, an event which, taken with an attempt upon the Shah's life a few months later, was a reminder of the deep undercurrents of hostility to the régime which continued to flow through

obscure and murky channels. The Shah, however, preferred to believe that his only serious opponents were the communists, a term which he applied to anyone who questioned his policies or his goals for the country. Manṣūr's place was taken by Amīr ʿAbbās Huvaida, deputy-chairman of the *Ḥizb-i Īrān-i Novīn*, who was to hold the premiership longer than any other twentieth-century Iranian prime minister (January 1965–July 1977). His opponents dismissed him as the Shah's mouthpiece, but others discerned the complex personality of the survivor, until he finally succumbed to his master's need for a scapegoat and later became one of the first prominent victims of the revolution.

The Huvaida years (at least until the mid-1970s) seemed like a halcyon time of economic growth and apparent stability, with the spectacular increase in oil revenues after 1973 resulting in vast government spending. There was no political life in the conventional sense of the word, and the repression was such that frustrated young men and women, lacking other channels for protest, turned to terrorism. Several small urban guerilla movements appeared, the two most prominent being the *Fidāʾīyān-i Khalq* (Selfless Devotees for the People), broadly Marxist in inspiration, and the *Mujāhidīn-i Khalq* (Holy Warriors for the People), whose tenets were both Islamic and socialistic, reflecting the influence of Ṭalaqānī.[41] The activities of such groups never came near to undermining the self-confidence of the régime, or seriously disrupting it. They did, however, keep alive a commitment to the overthrow of tyranny, and to armed resistance, which made them the harbingers of the later revolutionary struggle. The régime hated them with an intensity it expended upon no other foes. When captured, the guerillas, men and women alike, were relentlessly tortured and their mortality rate was very high.[42]

Apart from the irritant of guerilla activities, which naturally did not receive much publicity, the régime now enjoyed almost universal acceptance. It was a staunch ally of the West and a favourite protégé of the United States, but it also maintained relatively good relations with the Soviet Union and China (with which formal diplomatic ties were established in 1973). The Shah's international visibility, the constant flow of distinguished visitors to his court, and his much-publicized reciprocal state visits abroad provided his régime with the legitimation and the respectability which he had long sought. His ultimate effort in this direction was the costly celebration of what was publicized as two

[41] A selection of Ṭālaqānī's writings can be found in an anthology of translations into English, Taleghani, *Society and Economics in Islam*.

[42] For estimates of mortality among guerillas, by sex and occupation, see Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, pp. 480–1. For a sympathetic account of the *Mujāhidīn-i Khalq*, see Irfani, *Revolutionary Islam in Iran*. See also Abrahamian, *op. cit.*, pp. 480–95.

thousand five hundred years of Iranian monarchy, of which his reign was to mark the culminating phase. In retrospect, the Persepolis "party" of 1971, as it came to be called derisively, appears to have marked the beginning of an obsession with personal aggrandisement and with military might which substantially contributed to the Shah's eventual overthrow. The heartless extravagance in a country where the majority of the population still lived in grinding poverty, and the vulgarity of this pretentious display of "the pompe of Persian kings", made even those foreigners who were impressed by the Shah's record, wonder at such evidence of megalomania. Few foreign observers understood the depth of the unvoiced contempt felt by the Iranian people. Once again, it was the exile in Najaf who most eloquently expressed those feelings in his denunciation of "these frivolous and absurd celebrations" and of the violence and tyranny characteristic of the rule of Shah after Shah. According to the Prophet of Islām, he declared, "the title of King of Kings . . . is the most hated of all titles in the sight of God. Islām is fundamentally opposed to the whole notion of monarchy."[43]

The event to which Khumainī referred was closely followed by three developments which brought the Shah to the pinnacle of personal *hubris*, but which also unwittingly hastened his fall. First, in that same year of 1971, as a result of Great Britain's withdrawal from her traditional rôle of policeman of the Persian Gulf, the Shah volunteered to take over in place of the British, an offer which they and the Americans accepted with alacrity. This conferred upon Iran the status of a regional power, provided that she could acquire the military might to sustain the rôle. It was here that the United States proved so helpful. In May 1972, President Nixon and Secretary of State Kissinger flew to Tehran for a brief but momentous meeting with the Shah. Its outcome was to enhance the Shah's international standing even further, for before his guests left, they had assured him that he could purchase whatever weapons he wanted from the United States, nuclear weapons excepted. This placed Iran in a unique position among America's allies, and the Shah now had *carte-blanche* to indulge in his "obsession with everything that flies and fires".[44] All that was missing was the means, but once this was found, the third link in the chain would be forged. During 1973, the Shah made it plain that he was not satisfied with the current

[43] Khomeini, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

[44] The phrase is quoted from an entry in the diary of the Iranian ambassador to Great Britain, written on 9 September 1978, in which he criticizes the Shah for "his false priorities and disastrous economic policies, his military grandiosity and obsession with everything that flies and fires, his unquenchable thirst for flattery and his breathtaking insensitivity to the feelings of his own people, his vainglory and his ceaseless lecturing . . ." Radji, *In the Service of the Peacock Throne*, p. 228.

level of oil prices. Prudently, he did not join the Arab states in their blackmail of the industrialized world, but he insisted that, in his view, the West was paying too little for a diminishing resource. In any event, Iran benefited, along with every other oil producer, from the Arab embargo and the subsequent rise in oil prices. In this way, the Shah now acquired the means to embark upon an incredible programme of arms procurement and the purchase of anything else which took his fancy.

Yet even during the first half of the 1970s, doubts were being expressed abroad regarding the premises upon which the Shah's *Tamaddun-i Buzurg* (Great Civilization) rested. In the United States, in the wake of the Vietnam War, there was increasing scepticism as to the desirability of supporting repressive dictatorships which lacked popular backing, despite the assumption that the Shah's land reforms had won him widespread support at home. He certainly received a share of the blame for the increase in oil prices which led to the inflation of the mid-seventies. Moreover, after Watergate, the American press developed a sharp nose for smelling out unsavoury goings-on, and corporate dealings with Iran, especially in the area of weapons sales, came under close scrutiny. Gradually, criticism of the Shah's regime, formerly deemed irresponsible and not conducive to western interests, became more outspoken. In particular, accounts of internal repression, and the torture and execution of opponents by SAVAK, began to receive widespread attention.[45] Amnesty International's 1975 report on the treatment of political prisoners in Iran was extensively covered in the European and American Press, and in March 1975, an article in *The Sunday Times* of London reported that "no country in the world has a worse record in human rights than Iran".[46]

Anti-Shah demonstrations by Iranian students at foreign universities attracted support on their host campuses, especially in West Germany and the United States, and informed academic opinion began to swing in the same direction. In 1969, Bahman Nīrūmand had published an indictment of the régime which constituted the first attack upon the Shah's record easily accessible in English. In the mid 1970s, the writings of the poet, Riżā Barāhinī, as a prisoner of conscience, attracted considerable interest. Two books of his published in

[45] See, for example, Fallaci, *Interview with History*, pp. 262–87; Fitzgerald, *op. cit.*, pp. 55–82; Wallace, *Close Encounters*, pp. 333–4, for interviews in 1973, 1974 and 1976 respectively by journalists who focused on the falsehoods and shortcomings of the régime.

[46] P. Jacobson, "Torture in Iran", *The Sunday Times* (London), 19 January 1975. See also Amnesty International, *Annual Report* for 1974–5 (London, 1975); Amnesty International, *Briefing Paper on Iran* (London, 1976); The International Commission of Jurists, *Human Rights and the Legal System of Iran* (Geneva, 1976); and Ahmad Faroughy, "Repression in Iran", *The New York Times*, 16 March 1975.

English, *God's Shadow* (1976) and *The Crowned Cannibals* (1977), revealed for those willing to be convinced the hideous reality behind the glittering facade. In the months preceding the revolution, what had formerly been no more than a trickle of protest became a swelling stream. Ironically, growing American scepticism regarding conditions in Iran was probably heightened by the public relations activities of the Iranian mission in Washington, where the ambassador was the son of the man who had ousted Muṣaddiq in 1953. The gossip columns, on the one hand, revelled in accounts of lavish and ostentatious parties hosted at the ambassador's residence while, on the other hand, elsewhere in the press, there were grim reports from Tehran of extensive poverty, an ever-widening gulf between rich and poor, and the growing unpopularity of the government. All this contributed to widening the credibility gap.

Thus, by the mid-1970s, the Shah's image was becoming tarnished. American opinion no longer viewed him as an indispensable bulwark against communism on an exposed flank. The increase in oil prices and the Shah's habitual criticism of the West for its shortcomings and its onset of decadence increasingly irritated a public well-informed as regards the Iranian government's extravagance, the record of internal repression, corruption in high places, and the general mismanagement of the country's resources. Behind the ballyhoo of an imperial Iranian renaissance it was now possible to discern the realities of under-development, poverty, slums and shanty-towns, malnutrition and illiteracy. This growing awareness raised the question as to how far American public opinion, especially after the election of President Carter in 1976, would be willing to support intervention on behalf of its Iranian client, should the need arise. The conflicting points of view of American policy-makers as to how to respond to the crisis of 1978 reflected what had become by then a thoroughly ambiguous climate of opinion in Washington *vis-à-vis* the Pahlavī régime.

THE COMING OF THE REVOLUTION, 1977–8

In the opening months of 1977, on the eve of the revolution, it seemed as if the Pahlavī autocracy had attained the apogee of power and prestige. Yet beneath the surface all was far from well. The anticipated economic miracle had failed to materialize, leaving expectations unfulfilled, while the government, despite its rhetoric, became more and more enmeshed in flawed planning and bumbling implementation. The Shah's preoccupation with creating a military establishment worthy of a great power involved not only digging deep into the enormous post-1973 oil revenues, but also further distorting the economy by

drawing into the armed services and away from the civilian sector such few technical skills and such little "know-how" as were available. This further diminished the pool of skilled labour and necessitated the recruitment of costly foreign experts. Meanwhile, the Western industrialized nations were responding to the rise in oil prices by further raising the price of their consumer goods and services, an untoward development which infuriated the Shah, and which produced a spiralling pattern of inflation. It was becoming clear that the Shah's determination to transform Iran into a fully industrialized country at breakneck pace was placing tremendous strain upon an over-extended economy, which was suffering simultaneously from inefficient and wasteful management, massive corruption, and social dislocation.

For ordinary Iranians, the consequences of the Shah's megalomaniac dreams were rising prices, shortages of food and other basic items, lack of adequate housing, the breakdown of essential services, and rising unemployment among the unskilled, exacerbated by the drift of the rural poor into the fast-growing urban slums and shanty-towns. For the middle classes, the cost and scarcity of urban housing was perhaps the most serious cause of complaint, and they blamed the presence of foreign workers and their families as the prime cause of both inflationary rents and actual shortages. Of all foreigners, the Americans tended to be the most conspicuous, and while their high standard of living was bitterly resented, it was also widely believed that they were occupying jobs for which there were Iranians already qualified, or ones for which Iranians should be trained. The ubiquitous American presence also contributed to the notion that the Shah was little better than a puppet of the United States' government. The tide of popular xenophobia was running unusually strong.

While American, European and Japanese corporations were rushing to sell the Iranian government and Iranian entrepreneurs whatever they wanted, the road, rail and port facilities were on the verge of collapse, unable to handle the burden of incoming freight. The Gulf ports were brought to a standstill, with lines of ships waiting in the roadsteads to unload onto congested jetties cargoes which could then only be shifted to equally congested rail-sidings or loading-bays. In any case, much of the industrial plant and sophisticated equipment being acquired was beyond the capabilities of most technicians to work or maintain.

While the Shah dreamed of making Iran a military power the equal of any but the two Super Powers, the country could no longer feed itself. As a result of increased population, changes in dietary habits and the poor performance of the agricultural sector, Iran had now become a massive importer of foodstuffs. In

consequence, food prices rose sharply. Land reform had not made agriculture more efficient or productive. Now, as part of the preoccupation with modernization at any price, agrobusinesses were introduced in an attempt to increase productivity. Yet where these were set up, they failed to produce sufficient quantities of foodstuffs to bring down prices, while the concomitant contraction of the agricultural labour-force further disrupted the traditional village economy and hastened the flood of pauperized peasants to the cities.

Historians will long debate the remote and immediate causes of the Iranian revolution, but it is probable that most future analyses will include among the contributory factors Muḥammad Riżā Shāh's obsession with accelerated development beyond the country's capacity to absorb it, and with the creation of armed forces which the country did not need and could not pay for; pervasive corruption, which permeated the highest levels of government, and which bred envy and resentment among those who could not share in it; and the disenchantment and alienation of the young and the educated. To these must be added the Shah's contemptuous disregard for the traditional religious culture of his subjects; his equally contemptuous rejection of meaningful participation in the political process by a population made increasingly familiar through education and the mass-media with life in democratic Western societies; and the ferocious repression which was directed mindlessly against all opponents or critics of the régime.

In considering the various factors which contributed to making Iran ripe for revolution, two further developments must be taken into account: the Shah's decision in 1975 to found a single, monolithic party to serve as a watchdog over both government and society in the interests of the "Shah and People's Revolution", and the move towards greater liberalization, which he initiated two years later. The decision to found a new party, *Ḥizb-i Rastākhīz-i Īrān* (Resurgence Party of Iran), was preceded early in 1975 by the abolition of the *Ḥizb-i Īrān-i Novīn* and the *Ḥizb-i Mardum*, Tweedledum and Tweedledee in the art of obsequiousness. The object now was to create a one-party system in which, in theory, the entire society was supposed to participate, in order to hasten the goals of the "Shah and People's Revolution", of which the Rastākhīz Party would become the official mouthpiece, functioning in much the same way as other totalitarian parties. Those who refused to join the new organization were, in the Shah's view, communists or traitors, for whom there could be no place in the new Iran: for such persons, there were only two alternatives, jail or exile.

Thereafter, a party organization was soon set up by self-seeking zealots

whose activities alienated all those Iranians who were brought into contact with it and who immediately recognized it for what it was, an opportunist device to monitor and interfere in their lives to an even greater extent than the régime had done heretofore. In particular, intellectuals, *bāzārīs* and ʿulamā were targeted for harassment. In fact, the Rastākhīz Party was the ultimate folly which fuelled the fires of popular resentment, and it is likely that the reversal of the Shah's policies two years later, which permitted relatively open debate on matters of public concern, was in response to the swelling undercurrents of discontent provoked by Rastākhīz activists.

It is possible that the Shah may have come to feel that the men with whom he had surrounded himself had failed him. He was later to complain, ingenuously, that his advisers had cut him off from his people. There was also the matter of his failing health, still a close-kept secret. Finally, there was the new man in the White House, an unknown factor but a declared libertarian who had spoken out unequivocally regarding human rights. Throughout 1977, therefore, the Iranian government displayed an unprecedented willingness to tolerate criticism. Representatives of the Red Cross were allowed to inspect certain prisons, and foreign lawyers were allowed to be present at the trials of some political dissidents. Former leaders of the National Front, jurists, professors and leading intellectuals were permitted to air their grievances in open letters and communications to the Press. There were demands for the restoration of the Constitution of 1906 (upheld in name but subverted in fact by the Pahlavīs), the rule of law and the democratic process, while censorship, police harassment and the activities of SAVAK agents and Rastākhīz officials were loudly excoriated. Meanwhile, and largely unknown to middle-class liberal protesters, the sermons in the mosques and the rumours in the bazaars were becoming increasingly subversive, fuelled by cyclostyled letters and sermons on cassettes smuggled into the country from Najaf, where Āyatullāh Khumainī was denouncing the godless tyranny of the Shah, agent of United States' and Israeli imperialism.

Even as late as 1977 it seems that neither the Shah nor his security forces diagnosed a serious threat from organized religion. The activities of the religious "Left" were doubtless well known to SAVAK. There were, in Iran itself, the Mujāhidīn-i Khalq, with their support coming mainly from students and their ideology from the writings of Ṭālaqānī, Āyatullāh Murtażā Mutahharī (1920–79) and Dr ʿAlī sharīʿatī (1933–77).[47] Abroad, there were those students, of whom Abuʾl-Ḥasan Banī Ṣadr and Ṣādiq Quṭbzāda in Paris were not

[47] cf. Chapter 19, pp. 756–8.

untypical, who rather idiosyncratically melded the teachings of Islam with ideological borrowings from the European Left. The first were to be liquidated; the second, watched and, when appropriate, harassed.

Of more conservative enemies, especially among the ᶜulamā, the government appears to have known far less, or else rated them no serious danger. Nevertheless, since the crisis of 1962–3, SAVAK had not hesitated to persecute clerics or theological students whom it deemed irreconcilable. Some (like Āyatullāh Muḥammad Riżā Saᶜīdī, who dared to raise his voice against further American investment in Iran) were tortured to death, while others, who survived, were so brutally handled that they never fully recovered. Ṭālaqānī's unlooked-for death in 1979 may have been due to the appalling treatment which he had earlier received at the hands of his interrogators. Many of the leading clerics of the revolutionary period had first-hand experience of the Shah's prisons. Nevertheless, by the close of 1977, despite the fact that the best known clerical opponents of the régime were either in exile, as in the case of Khumainī, or in prison, as in the case of Ṭālaqānī, the work of creating an underground network of like-minded enemies of the government was proceeding rapidly. Former pupils of Khumainī, such as Mutahharī and Muntaẓirī, were disseminating his teachings and forming the infrastructure for future revolutionary activity through a web of associations – *madrasas*, mosques, *haiʾats* (informal groups meeting to discuss religious matters) and *ḥusainīyas* (religious clubs for staging the Muḥarram passion plays) – of which the security forces were apparently unaware.

Among the senior clerics, attitudes ranged from quietist non-involvement in politics to outspoken opposition to the government. In Qum, with Khumainī in exile, the three resident Marjaᶜ-i Taqlid (Sources of Emulation), Āyatullāh Muḥammad Riżā Gulpāygānī, Āyatullāh Shihāb al-Dīn Marᶜashī al-Najafī, and Āyatullāh Sayyid Kāẓim Sharīᶜatmadārī, acted as an informal triumvirate. Not one of them could be described as an activist, in the way Khumainī clearly was, but all three had been scarred by the events of 1962–3 and subsequent happenings. The Āẕarbāījānī, Sharīᶜatmadārī, enjoyed a justifiable reputation for sanctity and learning. Benign in appearance, and gentle and persuasive in manner, he was a patrician cleric who only gradually and grudgingly came to acknowledge the necessity for active participation by the ᶜulamā in the engulfing crisis of the time. Even so, he foresaw and dreaded the inevitable compromises, entanglements, and ultimate loss of spiritual freedom which were bound to accompany clerical involvement in the day-to-day business of running a government. It was to be his personal tragedy that, apprehensive at the notion of the ᶜulamā seizing the commanding heights of the revolutionary struggle, and

willing to keep all channels of communication open for negotiation, he would be so swiftly upstaged by the vehemence and certainty of purpose of the clerical activists.

If any one event can be said to mark the beginning of the Iranian Revolution, it was the publication of an article in the Tehran daily, *Iṭṭilāᶜāt*, on 7 January 1978, grossly vilifying Āyatullāh Khumainī. It obviously originated very high up in the government and the editor of *Iṭṭilāᶜāt* was instructed to print it without alteration. Within a matter of hours, the newspaper's offices had been ransacked by an outraged mob. Two days later, in Qum, a crowd of perhaps five thousand, many of them theological students, assembled in the shrine to protest at the insult directed against the man who was not only the symbol of resistance to the government but also a revered spiritual leader. The list of demands read out on that occasion – implementation of the Constitution, freedom of speech, freedom for political prisoners, freedom to form religious associations, an end of censorship and police violence, the dissolution of the Rastākhīz Party, etc. – constituted most of the proclaimed goals of the opposition during the early months of 1978, although it would not be long before they would be replaced by more radical ones. Then, when the crowd began to leave the shrine, shouting anti-government slogans, the police were waiting for them and opened fire. Some died instantaneously; others, later, from gunshot wounds. It was alleged that the security forces refused to allow blood to be donated at local hospitals, a recurring accusation throughout the coming months.

As the senior Marjaᶜ-ī Taqlīdᶜ in Qum, it fell to Āyatullāh Sharīᶜatmadārī to voice the public outrage at this atrocity, which he did promptly and unambiguously. For the government to authorize such action was, in his judgment, clearly unIslamic. He declared a moratorium on public prayers and threatened to lead a funeral procession of the coffins of the victims to the gates of the royal palace. Most important of all, the traditional forty days of mourning were to be observed in all major cities, thereby initiating those cyclical waves of protest and violence which regularly punctuated the course of the following months, beginning in Tabrīz on 18–19 February, when anger and resentment on behalf of the "martyrs" of Qum led to attacks on banks and liquor shops, symbols of Westernization, and the offices of the hated Rastākhīz Party. The police, taken unawares, called in the army to assist them, and violent confrontation led to further deaths, which in turn ushered in another forty-day period of mourning. So it continued. During the course of protracted demonstrations in Qum on 10 May, a brutal assault was launched on the house of Āyatullāh Sharīᶜatmadārī by a band of paratroopers, allegedly led by their commander, General Manūchihr

Khusraudād, in person. The Āyatullāh was away from home, but two theological students who were present and who refused to shout "Long Live the Shah" were shot dead.

The authorities were clearly caught by surprise by the large numbers, as well as by the determination and discipline of the demonstrators who appeared on the streets during the course of these periods of mourning. But the fact was that, during the preceding decade, the urban population, in provincial centres no less than in Tehran, had grown enormously, as floods of migrants from an impoverished and neglected rural hinterland poured into them in search of work. With the economic boom over and unemployment rising, these migrants, whether single male workers or whole households, found themselves in a chilling economic climate, cut off from the comforting certainties of village life and the support of an extended kinship structure. Alone in an unfamiliar world of urban slums and shanty-towns, without resources and without hope, they naturally gravitated for comfort and assistance to the local mosque or *haiʾat*. It was from these *mustaẓʿafīn*, these deprived and dispossessed, as Khumainī called them, that there came a large part of the huge crowds which, as the revolution gained momentum, took over the streets, seemingly indifferent to the threat of police or army retaliation. With the recurring cycles of mourning, in which demonstrators participated in ever-increasing numbers, the revolutionary struggle became a mass movement in which the existing forms of government, and eventually the Shah himself, were swept away. He left the country on 16 January 1979, thereby paving the way for the return of Āyatullāh Khumainī on 1 February and the eventual proclamation of an Islamic Republic. The Shah died in Egypt on 27 July 1980, an exile as his father had been.

PART 2: FOREIGN RELATIONS

CHAPTER 8

IRANIAN RELATIONS WITH THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN THE EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES

The basis for the relationships between the Iranian and Ottoman empires in modern times was the Treaty of Qaṣr-i Shīrīn (17 May 1639). It ended the war which had gone on between the two for over a century and it established the boundaries which were to survive with little change into modern times. The salient division of the Middle East was preserved: the Tigris–Euphrates basin and eastern Anatolia remained under the Ottoman Sultan while the Caucasus remained in Iranian hands, later to fall to Russia. The Ottomans thus failed to achieve their long-standing objectives in the Caucasus and Āẕarbāījān, but Mesopotamia and the route to the Persian Gulf were definitely restored to them, with the removal of the principal foreign stimulus to revolt in Anatolia, thus greatly simplifying the efforts of subsequent Ottoman reformers to revive the empire from within and so save it from foreign attack. During the next century the treaty was observed by both sides, but less out of genuine friendship than as a consequence of internal weakness, preoccupation with reform, and foreign aggression.

The spark for renewal of the conflict came, strangely enough, from these modern reforms introduced into the Ottoman Empire during the "Tulip Period" (1718–30) under the leadership of Sultan Ahmad III (1703–30) and his Grand Vizier, Damad Ibrahim Pasha. The financial burdens of modernization, when combined with popular hostility towards the European modes and frivolities then fashionable in the palaces of the Sultan and among members of the ruling class, so threatened the Establishment that the Grand Vizier was enticed into an attack on Iran, in the hope that advantage might be taken of the internal disintegration during the reign of the last Safavid, Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain (1694–1722), to replenish the Ottoman treasury and lessen the burden of taxation on the Sultan's subjects without diminishing the Sultan's pleasures. When the Afghan invasion caused Iranian society to disintegrate, Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain's son, Ṭahmāsp, fled to Tabrīz, where he declared himself Shah and appealed to the Ottomans for help. At the same time, the Georgian Vālī of Tiflis, Wakhtang VI, used the situation to declare his own independence, attacking the

Sunnī Muslim inhabitants of Shīrvān who, in turn, also asked for Ottoman assistance. When Peter the Great responded to Ṭahmāsp's appeals to him also by moving his army to Astrakhan during the summer of 1722 and then occupying Darband in the autumn, the Ottomans were faced with a situation in which they could not have moved towards the Caspian even had they been ready to do so.[1] Soon afterwards, early in 1723, Ṭahmāsp granted his Russian protectors control of all his Caucasus provinces along the western shores of the Caspian, and Bākū was soon occupied. Thus Damad Ibrahim was confronted with a situation in which major territories once possessed by the Ottomans seemed certain to fall to Russia unless immediate Ottoman action were taken.

The Ottomans, of course, had long been disturbed by the possibility of Russian moves to the northern shores of the Black Sea and into the Caucasus. The long struggle over the Sea of Azov was only one aspect of this. Now, in response to the anarchy in Iran and the Russian threat to benefit by it, Damad Ibrahim felt the time ripe to make major new conquests and secure large additional revenues. As early as May 1722 orders were sent to the governors of the eastern provinces of Anatolia to mass their forces and move into Iranian territory without delay.[2] These orders were repeated and reinforced as soon as Iṣfahān fell to the Afghans in October, Ṭahmāsp's appeal for help was received, and the Russians took Bākū.[3] Officially, however, the Iranian campaign was not publicly proclaimed till April 1723.[4] The purpose stated was the expulsion of the Afghans and Russians from Iran, the regaining of territories once Ottoman, and the replacing of Shiᶜism by Sunnism throughout Iran.

The Ottoman army was organized into three divisions, each under its own *sardār*, for the purpose of campaigning in the Caucasus, Āẕarbāījān, and ᶜIrāq-i ᶜAjam,[5] and each campaign was almost entirely successful between 1723 and 1725. In the Caucasus, forces from Kars and Diyarbakr took Tiflis and Gori relatively easily.[6] Once the Russians had occupied Bākū, these Ottoman forces hastened to take Erivan (September 1724), Nakhchivān, Lori (August 1725) and Ganja (September 1725) from their Safavid garrisons before the Russians could reach them. In western Iran (ᶜIrāq-i ᶜAjam), Ottoman forces from Baghdad, Van and Shahrazur, including large Kurdish contingents, took Kirmānshāh (12

[1] See also Chapter 1, pp. 20–1 concerning Shāh Ṭahmāsp and *vide infra* the rôle of Nādir Shāh.

[2] Başvekalet Arşivi (Prime Ministry Archives, Istanbul), hereafter BVA; Mühimme Defteri, hereafter Mühimme. Mühimme 130, p. 360, start Şaban 1134/May 1722.

[3] Mühimme, 130, p. 396, start Ramazan 1134/May 1722; Mühimme 131, p. 128, start Receb.

[4] Mühimme 131, p. 117; Mehmed Raşid, *Raşid Tarihi*, 2nd ed. (Istanbul, 1282), vol. v, p. 64.

[5] Mühimme, 132, pp. 230, 237, start Zilkade 1135.

[6] Mühimme 131, p. 190, start Sevval 1135/July 1723.

October 1723) and Luristān with the help of the local Sunnī inhabitants during the summer and autumn of 1723.[7] They then moved on against both Safavid and Afghan garrisons to capture Hamadān (31 August 1724), Ardalān and Marāgha the following summer.[8] The Āẕarbāījān front was commanded by the Ottoman governor of Van, Kopruluzadeh Abdallah Pasha, son of the famous Fazil Mustafa, who occupied Khūy, Quschī, Tasūj and Marand during the summer of 1724, but was forced by bad weather to lift the siege of Tabrīz, its conquest being postponed until the following summer.[9] However, a strenuous five-day popular resistance against the Ottomans in the streets of this capital of Āẕarbāījān led the Ottoman commanders to allow their troops to ravage and pillage Tabrīz for the last time in the long series of Ottoman conquests of that city.[10] Urmīya and the shrine city of Ardabīl were taken late the same summer, thus completing the Ottoman reconquest of Āẕarbāījān.

For the moment Istanbul was in ecstasy. All the major objectives had been secured. The Russians had been forestalled, the Afghans and Safavids defeated, and Dā'ūd Khān installed as Shīrvānshāh under Ottoman suzerainty and protection. However, Russian moves past Bākū into Georgia and efforts to raise the Cossacks and Circassians north of the Black Sea threatened conflict, while the Ottomans were also receiving appeals from various Muslim peoples in the Caucasus asking for protection against then Russians. The British and Austrian ambassadors in Istanbul were at this point actually working to secure a resumption of the Ottoman–Russian war which had been ended at Passarowitz.[11] They had the strong support of the Crimean Khan as well as the old Istanbul "war party", which still hoped to regain lost territories if only the war were resumed. However, their intrigues were successfully countered by the efforts of the Russian and French ambassadors, supported behind the scenes by the Sultan and the queen mother, who were even more desirous for continuation of peace than was the Grand Vizier.[12] The result was a series of Ottoman–Russian negotiations in Istanbul, mediated by the French ambassador.[13] At first, the Russians demanded that the Ottomans evacuate all occupied Iranian territory, including Georgia, Shīrvān, Dāghistān and Āẕarbāījān, but the Ottoman negotiators refused on the grounds that these territories were being held in trust for the Safavids (August 1723). While the Russian representative was on his way back

[7] Ismail Asım, Küçük Çelebizâde, *Asım Tarihi*, 2nd ed. (Istanbul, 1282), pp. 79–81.
[8] Mühimme 132, pp. 92, 117, Asım, pp. 180–9.
[9] 28 July 1725, Mühimme 132, year 1136, p. 69. [10] Mühimme 132, p. 345.
[11] I. Jacob, *Beziehungen Englands zu Russland und zur Turkei in den Jahren 1718–1727*.
[12] Münir Aktepe, *Patrona Isyanı, 1730*, pp. 73–85.
[13] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* IV/1, pp. 189–94.

to Moscow for instructions, Peter the Great announced his recognition of Ṭahmāsp II as Shah of Iran and the restoration to him of all provinces taken, except Gīlān, Māzandarān and Astarābād, which it was intended to include in the Russian Empire (September 1723). It was at this point that the Ottoman advance into Iran ceased. Dā᾽ūd Khān was officially proclaimed an Ottoman vassal and under Ottoman protection, with the river Kura the boundary between his territory and that of the Tsar. The Ottomans were willing to accept this much, but demanded that Darband and Bākū be turned over to them, because they were formerly under Ottoman rule. On this point the negotiations foundered for a time (15 January 1724), but the French ambassador finally persuaded the Sultan to accept Russian control of these two cities. The stalemate was broken and an agreement reached on 24 June 1724.

By its terms, the Russians accepted Ottoman control of Georgia, Shīrvān and Āẕarbāījān, including the cities of Tabrīz, Marāgha, Urmīya, Nakhchivān, Erivan, Hamadān, Kirmānshāh and Ardalān, with Dā᾽ūd Khān as Shīrvānshāh under Ottoman protection. In return, the Ottomans accepted Russian control of the Caspian provinces of Gīlān, Māzandarān and Astarābād. If Ṭahmāsp II accepted this agreement, both parties would recognize him as Shah of Iran, and the Ottomans would stand aside and remain neutral if the Russians chose to provide him with military assistance against the Afghans. However, if the Afghans attacked Ottoman territory, then the Ottomans would join in the move to push them out of Iran altogether.[14]

For the moment at least, both Russia and the Ottomans seemed satisfied with an agreement which achieved their own objectives at Iranian expense. Damad Ibrahim's prestige in Istanbul was higher than usual, both with the Sultan, who had more money available than ever before, and with the populace, which forgot its troubles and complaints when besotted with the news that the Sunnī Muslims of the Caucasus had been saved and that steps were being taken to regain the remainder of Iran for Sunnism; but events in Iran soon upset the settlement and led to the fall of both Sultan and Grand Vizier.

At first, Damad Ibrahim adhered strictly to his agreement with the Russians by refusing to receive the ambassadors sent by the new Afghan ruler, Ashraf (January 1726),[15] who replied by attacking the Ottomans in the vicinity of Hamadān, supported by border tribes. He achieved small success and, when he offered to support Sunnī Islam in Iran, a peace settlement was reached (4 October 1727)[16] at Hamadān. The Afghans abandoned border areas which they

[14] BVA, Name Defteri VII, p. 78; Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* IV/1, p. 193–4. Cf. below, Chapter 9 pp. 319–20. [15] Ismail Asım, pp. 434–7. [16] Mühimme 135, p. 145.

had taken and retired into the interior of Iran, where Ṭahmāsp demanded their attention. In return the Ottomans recognized Ashraf as Iran's sovereign. This was to recognize that Ṭahmāsp II had apparently proved about as incapable of resisting the Afghans as had his father.

Finally, the fugitive Shah fled to Gurgān and thence to neighbouring Khurāsān. There he was joined by a number of Türkmen nomadic tribes, including the Qājārs, commanded by Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān, and the Afshārs, whose leader, Nādir Khān, was soon able to drive the Afghans out of Iran, forcing them into the hills of Balūchistān. Ashraf himself was beheaded and his Ghilzai followers scattered. Ṭahmāsp II therefore was restored to Iṣfahān with a powerful Türkmen army commanded by Nādir Khān, to whom the name Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān had been awarded to indicate his position as "slave" of the Shah. It was accompanied by the title of Iʿtimād al-Daula. No longer a fugitive, Ṭahmāsp II declared he could not recognize the Ottoman–Russian agreement. He demanded that both parties should evacuate Iranian territory.[17] Damad Ibrahim attempted to solve the problem without war by agreeing to give up Kirmānshāh, Tabrīz, Hamadān, Ardalān, and all of Luristān in return for Iranian recognition of Ottoman rule in Tiflis, Kartli, Kakheti, and Erivan, and of Ottoman suzerainty over the Shīrvānshāh. Indeed orders were at once despatched for the evacuation to start. It was explained that the Ottomans had occupied these western Iranian cities only to save them from the Afghans.[18]

Ṭahmāsp was glad to regain lost territories, but, as Damad Ibrahim had been earlier, when Iran was disturbed, he was encouraged to obtain more by the news of the Ottoman government's unpopularity in Istanbul and the provinces; news evidently confirmed by the Grand Vizier's willingness to give up so much territory. Ṭahmāsp instructed Nādir Khān to use the implementation of the peace agreement as a cover for a full-scale assault against the Ottoman positions. Even as the Ottomans retired, therefore, Nādir Khān moved to the attack, capturing Farāhān and Yazdikhwāst, smashing Kopruluzadeh Abdallah's army before Tabrīz, which he then occupied as well as Hamadān (July 1730).[19] The Sultan immediately ordered his garrisons in the Caucasus and at Kars and Van to prepare for an enemy attack.[20] The Iranian ambassador was imprisoned, and preparations were made for a new campaign into western Iran, starting late in July 1730. At this point, however, the news from the east finally ignited the tinder of revolt in Istanbul which had been smouldering for so long.

[17] Mühimme 136, p. 3, Cemaziülevvel 1142, p. 155.
[18] Mühimme 136, p. 189, end Safar 1143.
[19] Aktepe, *Patrona*, pp. 90–1, *ʿAbdi Tarihi*, pp. 14–21.
[20] Mühimme 136, p. 126.

Preparations for war were interrupted by the most bloody revolution in Ottoman history, known from its leader's name as the Patrona Revolt. Sultan Ahmad III and Damad Ibrahim were eliminated, and while the new Sultan, Mahmud I (1730–54), did not share the rebels' desire for reaction, it was some time before he could establish sufficient authority over the state to resume either the war against Iran or the programme of reforms. Thus, while Nādir Khān's campaign against the Ottomans on behalf of Shāh Ṭahmāsp II was not halted by the revolution in Istanbul, the Ottoman response, in the form of a retaliatory expedition, had to be postponed. It was not until the new Sultan had driven the rebels out of Istanbul that Hakimoglu ʿAli Pasha, who had been appointed sardar of the eastern front, beat back an Iranian effort to take Erivan (March 1731). He routed the enemy and captured all its artillery and supplies. He then went on to retake Urmīya (15 November 1731) and Tabrīz (4 December 1731), thus winning for himself the title of *ghāzī* (hero), awarded by a grateful Sultan. At the same time, the governor of Baghdad, Ahmad Pasha, retook Kirmānshāh (30 July 1731) and Hamadān (18 September 1731), the latter after routing a large Iranian force led by the Shah himself (15 September 1731). With authority previously granted him by the Sultan, Ahmad Pasha then entered into peace negotiations with the Shah, resulting in an agreement by which Erivan, Ganja, Tiflis, Nakhchivān, Kartli, Kakheti, Dāghistān and Shīrvān would remain under Ottoman control, while the areas of western Iran and Āẕarbāījān, including Hamadān, Tabrīz, Kirmānshāh, Luristān, Ardalān and those areas inhabited by the Hawiza tribe would return to the Iranians. The River Aras now became the boundary between the two states in the north, and the boundaries established by the treaty of Qaṣr-i Shīrīn remained unaltered in the south.[21]

For the moment peace reigned, yet neither side was satisfied. The Sultan had not expected his plenipotentiary to give away so many territories conquered by his army, and he had particularly wanted to retain control of Tabrīz. Apparently, Ahmad Pasha had agreed to give up the latter either because he had not received information that it had been reconquered by Hakimoglu ʿAli, or because that information reached him too late to change the course of the negotiations. This was of little solace to the Sultan, particularly since the old rumours of bribery and corruption once again were spreading among the populace. The Grand Vizier, Topal Osman Pasha, was sacrificed to the clamour. He was replaced by the conqueror of Tabrīz, Hakimoglu ʿAli Pasha (12 March 1732).

Iran meanwhile was equally unhappy with the agreement: large areas of

[21] Mehmet Subhi, *Tarih* (Istanbul, 1198), pp. 39–41/January 1732.

Iranian territory had been left in Ottoman hands. Although Ṭahmāsp soon afterwards succeeded in urging the Russian evacuation of the districts south of the Saliyan river by the Treaty of Rasht (February 1732), he remained strongly criticized throughout his realm because of his military failure before the Ottomans (see p. 30), and subsequent acquiescence in their continued presence in Iran. Nādir Khān in the meantime was in Herat, fighting the Afghans. When he heard of the Shah's surrender, he marched back to Iṣfahān and exploited personal prestige and popularity among the people, as well as his military might, to dethrone Ṭahmāsp in favour of his infant son, ʿAbbās, Nādir retaining real power as chief minister (Vakīl al-Daula) and regent (Nāʾib). The deposed Shah was sent off to imprisonment in Khurāsān (7 July 1732).[22] Nādir Khān very quickly gathered power into his own hands, appointing his own men to all the key positions in the government. He then declared his primary aim to be the recovery of all those territories ceded to the Ottomans by an agreement extorted from the former Shah after he had found himself in a position of military disadvantage.[23]

In fact, Nādir Khān's ambitions went far beyond the mere reconquest of Iranian territory, as victory after victory led him deep into territory previously held by the Ottomans. His first aim was western Iran and Iraq, both north and south. When the Ottomans attacked through the areas of Shahrazur and Derne, he replied by pushing them back and then going on to take Kirkuk and Irbil before laying Baghdad under siege on 12 January 1733. For the moment he was frustrated in his goals when Ottoman troops from Van, Erivan, and Tiflis, commanded by the governor of Erzerum, the former Grand Vizier, Topal Osman Pasha, passed by Kirkuk to surprise and rout Nādir's besieging force (20 July 1733). Nādir Khān himself escaped only with difficulty. All his supplies and ammunition fell into Ottoman hands. Kirkuk and Derne were retaken. Anatolia was saved from what in Istanbul had appeared to be the certain threat of invasion. Topal Osman Pasha was now the man of the hour.

Nādir Khān, however, was no ordinary man. Demonstrating the tremendous vitality and energy which were to characterize his entire career, he reformed his army in a far shorter time than anyone could expect. Simultaneously, the Ottoman troops which had triumphed at Baghdad returned home for the winter and Topal Osman Pasha was stricken with an illness which prevented him from taking the measures necessary to reform his forces for the spring.[24] Nevertheless, Nādir Khān's effort to regain Mosul was beaten off by its garrison (October

[22] Mühimme 138, pp. 388, 410. [23] Mühimme 138, p. 258. [24] Mühimme 139, p. 327.

1733); but, with the Ottoman provincial forces still largely demobilized, he moved towards Kirkuk. Here he met and routed Topal Osman Pasha's army at Lailan, five hours distant, killing the Ottoman commander and capturing his entire camp (30 November 1733) before going on to reoccupy Kirkuk, Derne, and Shahrazur. Now Nādir Khān hoped for a new peace treaty restoring all Iranian territories without further struggle, but this time it was Sultan Mahmud who resolved to fight on, sending the Grand Vizier, Hakimoglu ʿAli Pasha as supreme commander, while Kopruluzadeh Abdallah Pasha was appointed commander on the Iranian front (12 March 1734).[25] The Crimean Khan, Qaplan Giray I, was sent to the Caucasus to maintain Ottoman power there despite the defeats to the south. In January 1734, Nādir Khān again laid Baghdad under siege, threatening to continue the attack until Tiflis, Shīrvān, Kartli, Ganja and Erivan were turned over to him. Baghdad had still not replenished its stores following the last long siege: it seemed unlikely it could withstand a second investment of equal length. The governor, Ahmad Pasha, consequently informed Nādir that he would consider his terms, but would have to ask Istanbul for instructions. Nādir, hoping very much for a peaceful outcome, withdrew his forces and returned to Iran, thus foregoing what might easily have been a major victory. Baghdad was immediately resupplied and fortified.[26] Nādir Khān's demands were rejected in spite of the entreaties of the Grand Vizier. Because the latter advocated peace he was recalled to Istanbul, with Kopruluzadeh Abdallah Pasha left in sole command of the eastern front.

His second peace proposal rejected, Nādir Khān again moved to the attack, this time in the Caucasus. While the Shīrvānshāh was busy suppressing revolts along the Caspian in Dāghistān, Nādir seized his capital of Shamākhī (August 1734), with the help of a large number of Shīʿī Qizilbāsh living in and near the city. The Shīrvānshāh hesitated to return and take up the challenge, fearing the loyalty of many of the Qizilbāsh tribesmen who formed the bulk of his own army. He waited for help from the Crimean Tatars and the governor of Tiflis before attacking Nādir Khān, but even so was routed twice and finally forced to flee the scene, leaving Shīrvān and Dāghistān open to complete Iranian occupation. With help from the Russian garrison in the north Caucasus, Nādir Khān's next aim was Ganja, which he laid under siege in November 1734, while sending another force to incite a Georgian revolt against the Sultan and, with the help of these new allies, he captured the town of Ordubād and the fort of Gori, while

[25] Mühimme 139, p. 1.
[26] Mühimme 139, pp. 418, 419/start Ramazan 1146/February 1734.



Map 6. Northwestern Iran during Nādir Shāh's wars with the Ottoman Empire

laying Tiflis under siege.[27] Abdallah Pasha organized a relief force with contingents commanded by the governors of Erzerum, Van and Erivan, and managed to raise the siege of Ganja (January 1735), and force Nādir to pull back across the river from Kars (25 May 1735), pursuing him as far as the Arpa Chay, a branch of the Aras. But a strong counter-attack by Nādir at Baghavard routed the Ottomans. Abdallah Pasha was killed (14 June 1735) and the remnants of the Ottoman force fled back to Kars.[28] The Iranians now were able to occupy Dāghistān and Georgia, including Ganja (9 July), Tiflis (12 August), and Erivan (3 October).

[27] Mühimme 140, p. 300/Ramazan 1147. [28] Mühimme 140, pp. 410, 418–9, 422.

Nādir again proposed peace on the basis of the Ottoman surrender of all towns on the right bank of the Aras. In response to the Ottoman defeats, as well as to the intrigues of the Chief Eunuch of the Palace, Hakimoglu ᶜAli Pasha was dismissed. He was banished to Metylene (12 July 1735) and replaced by Gurcu Ismail Pasha, a Georgian convert who had been one of Abdallah Pasha's lieutenants and was a protégé of the Chief Eunuch (29 September–25th December 1755). Gurcu Ismail Pasha now put his own men, representing the Chief Eunuch's party, into the chief positions of the central government as well as of the provinces, but he himself soon fell to intrigues and was replaced by Silahdar Muhammad Pasha (9 January 1736–6 August 1737), whom the difficult task of arranging peace awaited.

Having now gained everything he had wanted in Āẕarbāījān and the Caucasus, Nādir once again proposed peace. This time the Ottomans were much more receptive, due not only to the apparent hopelessness of the situation in the east, but because troubles with Russia seemed to presage a fresh major outbreak in the west. In the meantime, Nādir Khān summoned the tribal leaders and the representatives of the major elements and classes of the Iranian population to orchestrate a request that he become Shah. Threatening to retire unless they agreed, he mounted the throne only on the conditions mentioned elsewhere (see p. 36): the assembly had to promise never to support or assist any members of the Safavid family and to accept Nādir's son as his heir, thus to establish a new Afsharid dynasty in place of the Safavids. Also the Shīᶜī practices of cursing the first three Caliphs and persecuting Sunnīs were to be abolished. These conditions accepted, Nādir was proclaimed and crowned Shah in March 1736. His novel religious policy was intended not so much to establish Sunnism as the official religion of state as to counteract and undermine the power of the Shīᶜī *ᶜulamā* (see p. 707 for further discussion); but, as suggested above in the chapter devoted to Nādir Shāh, this policy had what might be termed an Ottoman side to it. For this innovation meant that orthodox Islam had returned to Iran, which made it easier for the Sultan and Grand Vizier to sign a peace agreement by which territory was relinquished to Iran. Nādir Shāh, as he now was, was anxious for peace because already planning to invade India, where he could and subsequently did gather wealth far beyond anything he could gain out of Ottoman provinces, unless he succeeded in marching all the way to Istanbul and taking the whole Empire.

With both sides, therefore, eager for peace, negotiations opened at Tiflis and were then moved to Nādir Shāh's camp at Mughān, in Āẕarbāījān. The initial Ottoman request was for Iranian agreement to re-establish the boundaries

delineated in the Treaty of Qaṣr-i Shīrīn, for ending the alliance with Russia and for forcing the latter to abandon Dāghistān, which was inhabited largely by Sunnī Muslims. Nādir Shāh replied that the Russians had, in fact, already abandoned that region, therefore the matter need not be discussed.[29] He went on to declare that all Shīʿīs were in fact adherents of a fifth orthodox school (*maẕhab*) of Islam, the Jaʿfarī (so named after the Imām Jaʿfar al-Ṣādiq the sixth Imam of the descendents of the Prophet Muḥammad through ʿAlī, his son-in-law). In this way Nādir hoped to facilitate peace negotiations with the Ottomans, and gain the support of the Sunnī Türkmen, Kurdish and Afghan tribesmen in his own army while at the same time something of Iranian pride might be salvaged by this Jaʿfarī sect being fully accepted as the fifth orthodox school, with special provisions accordingly being made for its Iranian adherents on pilgrimage to the Holy Cities. Such provisions would include their own Amīr al-Ḥājj to lead them. It was also required that ambassadors and prisoners should be exchanged between the two empires, between which Nādir seems above all to have sought parity and to suppress sectarian animosity. His ideas shocked the Iranian ʿulamā as much as the Ottoman, but they provided the foundation for an armistice. As, however, the Ottoman representatives lacked authority to modify any of the Sultan's demands or to treat on the religious questions, negotiations were finally transferred to Istanbul.[30] There they continued through the summer months, July–September 1736, interminable religious disputes occupying much of the time. In the end, a formula was developed in an attempt to satisfy all parties. The Iranian Shīʿīs would indeed have their own Amīr al-Ḥājj, but he would be allowed to lead them only as far as the Shīʿī holy places at Najaf in Iraq and Laḥsā. Those wishing to go via Syria to the Holy Places of Mecca and Medina could do so under this Amīr al-Ḥājj leadership, but, to satisfy Sunnī sensibilities, he would not be allowed to use the title of *Amīr al-Ḥājj*. The question of whether the Jaʿfarī Shīʿī beliefs of the Iranians should be accepted as a fifth school of Islam was left unacknowledged on the grounds that the adherence of Iranians to that sect had nothing to do with the Ottomans and in no way damaged them; however, the question of whether this sect would be allowed to establish its own relics in the Kaʿba was relegated to further discussion between the ʿulamā of the two empires. Each government was to have an ambassador in the capital of the other, with changes to be made once every three years, and both sides were to release the prisoners of the other, with the prisoners deciding where they should go; the Ottomans were thus not forcibly compelling Sunnī Muslims to go to

[29] Mühimme 141, p. 61; Mühimme 142, p. 10.

[30] Mühimme 142, p. 96, Muharrem 1149.

Iran. By now war between the Ottoman Empire and Russia was imminent. Nādir Shāh was beginning preparations to march into India. Neither side wanted to haggle over religious points, so an agreement was signed, with Mahmud I recognizing the Iranian occupation of the disputed areas and also accepting Nādir as Shah, while the religious question was left unsettled.[31]

Mahmud was willing to make peace with Iran at this time because of the urgent need to deal with a new war which now broke out with both Austria and Russia (1736–9). It has been claimed that the treaties of Belgrade and Nissa, which ended that war, gave the Ottomans three decades of peace. Peace did not, indeed, come in Europe, with Russia and Austria diverted first by the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–8), and then by the Seven Years' War (1756–63). But before the Ottomans could benefit from the new situation in the west, they still had to engage in another five years of warfare with Nādir Shāh in the third and final phase of clashes between the Ottoman Empire and Iran which had already dissipated so much manpower and energy earlier in the century.

For a time, Nādir Shāh had been occupied conquering Afghanistan and pushing conquest into India as far as Delhi (1737–40). But not long after his return from these areas he began to move once more against the Ottomans. At first he made an unsuccessful effort to get the Sunnī Muslims of Dāghistān to transfer their loyalties from the Sultan to him (April–May 1741), an attempt which may throw further light on his religious policy as a whole; then again he attempted to get the Ottomans to recognize the Jaʿfarī sect, to allow the Jaʿfarīs to have a recognized place in the Kaʿba, and to let him provide its mantle (*kiswa*) every other year, thus giving him a share in the religious prestige previously enjoyed by the Ottoman Sultans from their monopoly of the right to rule and maintain the Holy Cities (April 1742), but once again nothing definitive was agreed to. While Mahmud would have liked to give in to at least some of Nādir Shāh's demands in order to avoid further conflict, he feared that any gestures of concession would expose him to the wrath of the Sunnī ʿulamā, placing his own throne in danger. In the end his answer was to declare war, on 30 April 1742.[32] Preparations were made for expeditions into the Caucasus and western Iran, and as a precaution forces were sent to Hotin to guard against any possible Russian intrusion in support of its ally. A Safavid pretender, Ṣafī Mīrzā, was also officially proclaimed Shāh of Iran and sent first to Izmit and then to Erzerum, to be used as a rival to the authority of Nādir Shāh.

The war which followed was fitful and once again bloody. Nādir Shāh first

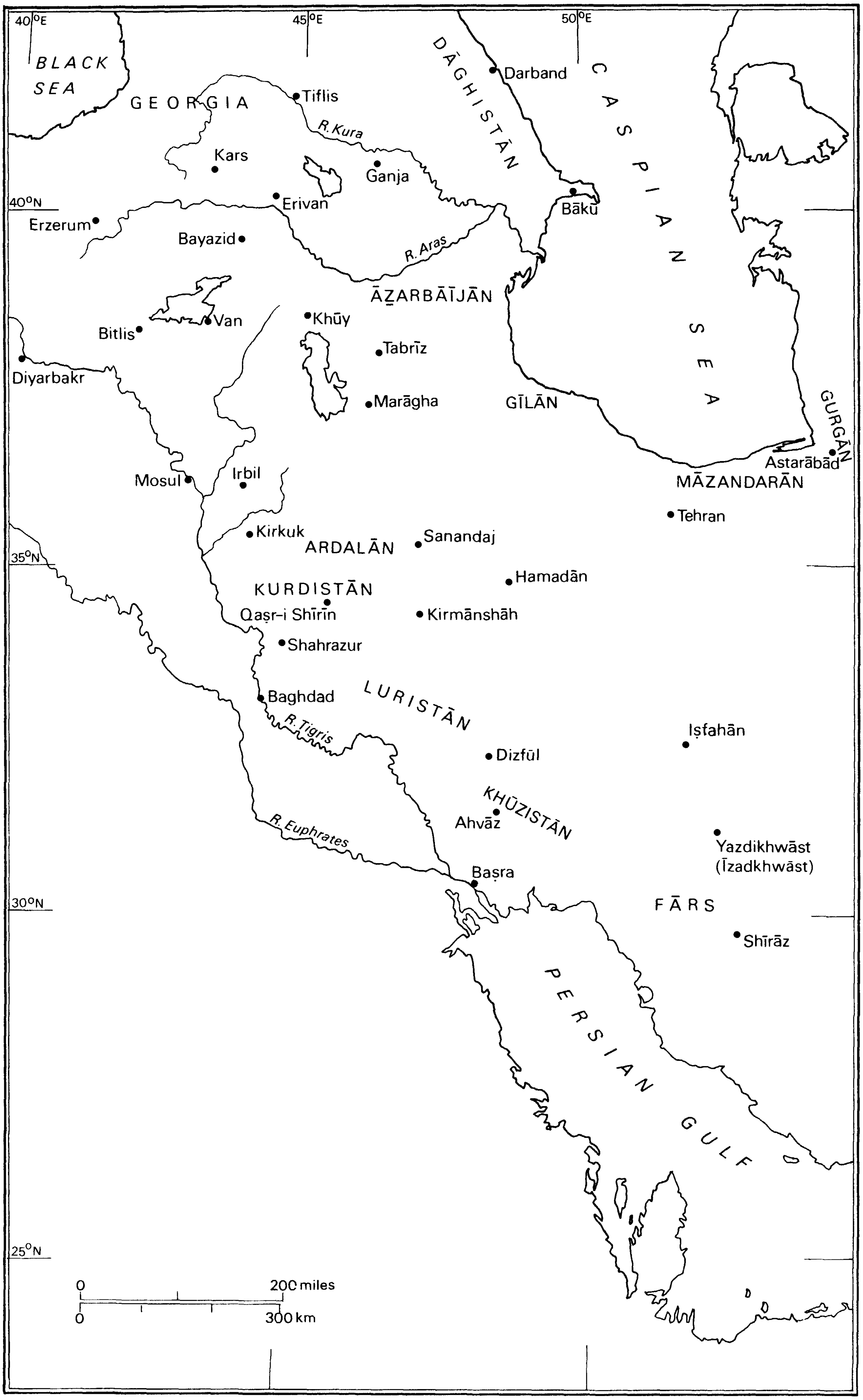
[31] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* IV/I, pp. 232–234; Subhi, fol. 90b–93.
[32] Mühimme 148, pp. 226, 243.

raided the environs of Baghdad to keep its garrison hemmed in, after which he rapidly moved north, to take Kirkuk in August 1743. In response to these challenges, the declaration of war in Istanbul was renewed, and Ṣafī Mīrzā sent to Erzerum (23 September) as the first step towards ostensibly reinstating him in Iran. Nādir Shāh had meanwhile begun the siege of Mosul (14–22 September 1743), subjecting it to a heavy bombardment,[33] but he was finally beaten back with heavy losses. The next summer, while the main Ottoman defence was concentrated for an expected attack in the Caucasus, Nādir first attempted to take Kars (July 1744), but again was beaten off, after which he advanced toward Erivan, but was almost routed by Yegen Muhammad Pasha, now sardar on the eastern front, at the nearby strong point of Baghavard.[34] However, when Yegen Muhammad Pasha died in battle and the *levend*s (irregulars) and other volunteers in his army scattered, an Iranian victory was assured, and the Ottoman army withdrew to Kars. Following the battle, Mahmud I issued new orders, forbidding his provincial governors from employing levends in their armies and inviting the mass of the people to join the struggle to eliminate the levends once and for all.[35] Hakimoglu ʿAli Pasha was ordered to lead a campaign against them, and by November 1745, most of Anatolia was almost completely cleared of them, a notable accomplishment.[36]

Both sides now saw that neither could win a decisive victory, and that continuation of the war would only drain their strength. Nādir Shāh hoped to use his victory at Baghavard to secure a favourable settlement, finally abandoning his claims on behalf of the Jaʿfarī sect, and instead concentrating on the demand that all of Iraq, including Baghdad, Baṣra and the Shīʿī holy places of Najaf and Karbalā, be turned over to him along with the Kurdish area of Van.[37] A series of letters and exchanges of ambassadors followed, and eventually an agreement was hammered out on 4 September 1746, by which the Qaṣr-i Shīrīn treaty boundaries were restored without change, with provisions made for the exchange of prisoners, as well as for the exchange of ambassadors once every three years. Nādir Shāh thereby abandoned all his former demands and the Ottomans accepted peace in accordance with the earlier agreements.

The last years of Mahmud I's long reign (1730–54), as well as the short and inconsequential reign of ʿUthman III (1754–7) and much of that of Ahmad III's son, Mustafa III (1757–74) in fact did provide the Ottoman Empire with the

[33] Subhi, II, 235. [34] Mühimme 152, p. 2; Süleyman Izzi, *Tarih-i Izzi*, fol. 30.
[35] Mühimme 152, p. 66.
[36] Mühimme 151, pp. 353, 390; Mühimme 152, p. 66, end Şevval/November 1745.
[37] Name Defteri, VIII, pp. 62–3.



Map 7. The Ottoman-Iranian frontier in the 18th century

longest continuous period of peace in its history. This was not because opportunities for war were lacking, but because of a conscious policy pursued by Sultans and Grand Viziers alike, to safeguard the empire from the kind of conflicts which had for so long drained its resources and threatened its very existence. As for Iran, there were numerous opportunities for renewed Ottoman adventures there following Nādir Shāh's assassination in 1747, with anarchy preceding and following the rule of Karīm Khān Zand (1750–79), and with Afsharid, Zand and Qājār chieftains struggling for mastery. Yet the Ottomans resisted the entreaties of their frontier governors that the situation should be exploited to regain lost territories. They remained faithful to the agreement signed with Nādir Shāh.[38] When the putative Safavid prince, Ṣafī Mīrzā, attempted to upset the peace agreement and secure further Ottoman aid in support of his own claims, he was imprisoned, first in Samsun and then at Rhodes, to stop him undertaking intrigues in Istanbul.[39] Other Iranian princes and politicians in exile who might have endangered the *status quo* were treated in a similar manner. Karīm Khān, on the other hand, pursued an actively aggressive policy against the Ottomans. He used local dynastic struggles in the Kurdish areas round Shahrazur as pretexts for unsuccessful intervention, followed by large-scale raids into eastern Anatolia, in February-March 1774 and in March 1775. Next, using as his excuse this time the alleged mistreatment of Shīʿī pilgrims to Karbalā in Mesopotomia, he intervened in the *mamlūk* political struggles then going on in Baghdad and tried to install his own candidate, while he took advantage of the situation to besiege and capture Baṣra.[40] ʿAbd al-Hamid I (1774–89) responded with a declaration of war on Iran in June 1776. He renewed ties with the local princes of Āẕarbāījān and Georgia to prevent them from joining Karīm Khān, and he tried to use the situation to replace the mamlūk governors of Baghdad with regular Ottoman governors. The latter subsequently made attacks on Iranian territory from Mosul and Baghdad, but disputes among the mamlūks, and between them and these regular Ottoman governors, prevented effective action against Karīm Khān; Baṣra remained in Iranian hands.

Karīm Khān also made an agreement with the Russians for a joint invasion of eastern Anatolia (1778), but his own death on 1 March 1779 and the quarrels which followed among his heirs put an end to this expedition. Ottoman acquiescence in the restoration of mamlūk power in Baghdad under the leadership of Buyuk Sulaiman Pasha in 1780, enabled him to eliminate rivals and

[38] Mühimme 153, p. 278. [39] Izzi, fol. 113.

[40] BVA, Name-i Humayun Defteri IX, 90; Mühimme 166, pp. 371, 373, 427; Mühimme 147, start Cemaziülevvel, p. 1190.

establish a rule which lasted until his death in 1802. The danger from Iran now receded, leaving Sulaiman and his successors in Baghdad better able at least to attempt to control the tribes of the mountains and deserts. Though frequent, these attempts could not be said ever to have been highly successful; the Bedouin were in a good position to flee into the expansive deserts, and incursions of the Wahhabis and their Bedouin allies from Central Arabia made matters worse. In the end, it was the desert Bedouin, rather than the Iranians, who posed the main menace to Ottoman rule in Mesopotomia.[41]

Hence relations between the two régimes remained relatively quiet for half a century. Hostile engagements began again early in the 19th century, due not so much to Iranian strength, as had been the case in the time of Nādir Shāh, but rather to Iranian weakness in the face of Russian attacks and a resulting desire to compensate losses to Russia with gains at the expense of the now weaker neighbour in the west. By this time Iran was under the rule of the Qājār dynasty (1794–1925), and during the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh (1797–1834), Iranian intervention across the Ottoman frontier, while sporadic, was quite persistent. After 1813, while the British worked to rebuild the Shah's army, the Russians tried to curry favour by encouraging Fatḥ ʿAlī to compensate for losses to them by seizing coveted territory elsewhere. Taking advantage of Mahmud II's diversions in Europe and at home, as well as of the resistance of chieftains near the Ottoman–Iranian borders to the Sultan's efforts to end their autonomy, Iranian raids into the areas of Baghdad and Shahrazur began as early as 1812 and continued relentlessly, despite Ottoman missions of protest and demands for compensation. At times, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's *beglerbegī*s openly supported the border chieftains against the Ottomans, and even helped the Baghdad mamlūks and the Muntafiq Bedouin against the Sultan. In 1817–18 Iranian troops ravaged the area of Van with the help of some local Kurdish tribes. Mahmud II (1808–39) was not at all anxious for war with Iran. He was faced with long-standing difficulties in the Balkans as well as the beginnings of the Greek Revolution. But the progression of border incidents finally led him to declare war in October 1820. He assigned to the governor of Erzerum, his old favorite Khusrau Pasha, command of the campaign in the north, while the mamlūks of Baghdad took the lead in the south. With the main Ottoman army away in Europe, however, the Iranians could be quite successful in two brief encounters. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's eldest son, Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, beglerbegī of Kirmānshāh, advanced in the direction of Baghdad, as he had done previously in 1804 and 1812, but was forced to retreat as a result of a cholera epidemic which depleted his forces and

[41] Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Tarihi* IV/1, pp. 455–64.

resulted in his own death in November 1821 before he could return to his base at Kirmānshāh. ʿAbbās Mīrzā, the Crown Prince, captured Bayazid and Toprak Qalʿa in September 1821 and advanced on Erzerum, while a second force took Bitlis and advanced towards Diyarbakr, assisted by several refugee Anatolian notables, who had been dispossessed by Mahmud and who hoped to use the Iranian presence to regain their former positions. But after taking Ercis (Arjish), the main Iranian army retired to Tabrīz for the winter, allowing the Ottomans to regroup their forces, this time under the leadership of the former Grand Vizier, Muhammad Amin Rauf Pasha. When ʿAbbās Mīrzā advanced again from Tabrīz, he routed the Ottoman army at Khūy (May 1822), but cholera then devastated his own troops, forcing him to seek peace from the pliant Sultan. By an agreement signed at Erzerum (28 July 1823), the peace treaty of 1746 was restored without change, the Ottomans again allowing Iranian merchants and pilgrims to enter the Sultan's territory, and even accepting Iranian claims to sovereignty over several border tribes in order to secure the peace which the Porte so urgently needed before turning to fight the Greek rebels. The subsequent Russian invasion of the Caucasus and their capture of Erivan and Nakhchivān ended Ottoman ambitions in that region and left Iran too weak to attempt new adventures in the south for some time to come.

During the remaining century of the Ottoman Empire's existence, military relations with Iran were limited to border conflicts and raids, stimulated largely by the movement of tribal groups across the frontiers. The major task of the Ottoman governors of Iraq and the provinces of eastern Anatolia was to erect strong defences against such incursions, but their efforts were largely unsuccessful, and local tensions remained throughout the 19th century. However, common economic interests made actual conflict disadvantageous for both sides. Quantities of silk and other exports from Iran passed through Ottoman territory, *via* Trebizond to the west, and while this gave the Sultan's government a certain leverage with its eastern neighbour, the considerable income and other advantages derived from keeping the route open also provided an incentive to maintain the peace, especially in view of the increasing competition from the Persian Gulf–Suez Canal and the Russian Caucasus routes, which developed late in the 19th century.[42] Both Iran and the Ottoman Empire were seriously affected by 19th-century European economic imperialism, thus boosting their common concerns, which included the manifestation on both sides, of somewhat similar reform movements, particularly after the Iranian Revolution of 1905 and the Young Turk Revolution, which occurred only three years later.

[42] Charles Issawi, "The Tabriz–Trabzon Trade, 1830–1900: Rise and Decline of a Route"; P.W. Avery and J.B. Simmons, "Persia on a Cross of Silver, 1880–1890".

CHAPTER 9

IRANIAN RELATIONS WITH RUSSIA AND THE SOVIET UNION, TO 1921

Before the 18th century relations between Iran and Russia were sporadic. Though some Persian goods found their way to Muscovy while the duchy was still under the Tatar yoke, travel and commerce remained insignificant until the mid 16th century, when the Russian conquest of the khanates of Kazan and Astrakhan opened the Volga route to the Caspian Sea. Soon Moscow became a minor entrepôt for Europe's Persian trade. From the north and the west there flowed into Iran a small stream of furs, cloth, metals, leather, amber, crystal. From Iran came silk, pearls, rugs, embroidered cloth, velvet, rice, fruit, and spices.[1]

Political and diplomatic relations between the two states were less important. After a brief clash of interests in Dāghistān early in the 17th century, the Russians withdrew from the northern Caucasus. The raids on Iran's shores by Sten'ka Razin's cossacks were a large-scale bandit enterprise conducted against the wishes of Russian authorities. Razin's mobs pillaged coastal towns, indiscriminately massacred their inhabitants, raped and abducted women, then disappeared without trace. Occasionally Muscovite envoys would appear in Iṣfahān or Persian envoys in Moscow, but the contacts they established were of short duration. It was Peter the Great who broke through the barrier of the Caucasus and for the first time confronted Iran with the Russian threat.

Though Peter I was primarily concerned with Europe, "he had from his earliest years taken a lively interest in Asia". In him, B. H. Sumner has written, "The enthusiasm of the explorer was allied with the gold-dazzled phantasy of the prospector and the merchant."[2] Persia, Central Asia and distant India excited his imagination. When Peter was defeated by the Turks in the Pruth campaign (1711), he turned his attention further East, to the Caucasus and Iran.

As early as 1701 the Tsar had been approached by one Israel Ori, who had arrived in Smolensk from Lithuania, claimed to be an Armenian nobleman and had a plan for the liberation of his people from Persian rule.

[1] Kukanova, "Russko-iranskie torgovye otnosheniia v kontse XVII–nachale XVIII v.", pp. 244–5. [2] B.H. Sumner, *Peter the Great and the Emergence of Russia*, p. 171.

There exists a prophecy [Ori wrote to the Tsar] that at the time of the end the infidel will be infuriated and will begin to force Christians to accept their obscene law; then will appear from the most august House of Moscow a great sovereign, who will exceed Alexander of Macedon in courage. He will take the Armenian kingdom and deliver the Christians. We believe that the fulfilment of this prophecy is approaching.[3]

Later other Armenians as well as Georgians pledged Russia their support should she undertake the task of liberating them from Muslim rule.

To explore the possibilities of both commerce and conquest Peter dispatched to Iran a young, bright official, Artemii Volynskii, who was given written instructions to note, when passing through the possessions of the Shah, everything about harbours, towns and settlements, and especially about rivers that flow into the Caspian; then in Peter's own hand was added, "and how far along such rivers can one sail from the sea, and whether there is a river that flows into that sea from India". Volynskii was to gather and record in a secret journal intelligence on Persian fortresses and troops. He was to impress upon the Persians that the Turks were their worst enemies whereas the Russians were their friends. Finally, he was to propose a commercial agreement that would give Russia a monopoly of Persia's silk trade.[4]

It took Volynskii more than a year to reach Iṣfahān, where he was initially well received. The attitude of the Persians changed abruptly a few days after his arrival, when they began to suspect the nature of his mission. It turned hostile as they learned of a Russian expedition under Prince Bekovich-Cherkasskii landing on the eastern shore of the Caspian. Three audiences with Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain and long negotiations with various officials, including the Iʿtimād al-Daula, led to the conclusion of a commercial treaty that permitted Russian merchants to trade freely in Iran.

More important was the knowledge of Iranian affairs gathered by Volynskii and transmitted by him to the Tsar. Volynskii reported that the Persian state was on the verge of collapse. The Shah did not rule and was so incapable "that one could seldom find such a fool even among the common people". Officials were lazy and conducted affairs irrationally and fitfully.

I think this Crown [Volynskii wrote] is nearing its ruin. . . . My weak reason cannot but conclude that God is leading this Crown to its fall, to which they themselves are enticing us through their folly. Seeing their stupidity I do not wonder, but think that this is God's will for the fortune of your Tsarian Majesty. . . . As I see the weakness here, we could begin without any apprehension since not only with an army but even with a small corps a great part [of Iran] could be annexed without difficulty to Russia . . .[5]

[3] S.M. Solov'ev, *Istoriia Rossii s drevneishikh vremen*, book IX, p. 387.
[4] *Ibid.*, IX, p. 366. [5] *Ibid.*, IX, pp. 367–8.

For the next several years Russia was too deeply absorbed in the Northern War to conduct an active policy toward Iran. In August 1721 the war came to an end with the treaty of Nystad and the victorious Tsar made ready for a campaign that would, if successful, turn the Caspian into a Russian lake.

Events in Iran provided the pretext for the Russian invasion. Dāʾūd Khān of the Lezghians, a rebel mountaineer chieftain long held captive in the citadel of Darband by the central authorities, was released after the Afghan attack on Iran. The government hoped that he and his Dāghistānī allies would come to the help of the Shah. Instead, Dāʾūd, a militant Sunnī, eager to overthrow the oppressive Shīʿī regime of the Safavids, put himself at the head of a tribal coalition and launched a campaign against the Shīʿī population and Persian forces.[6] Together with Surkhāʾī Khān of the Ghāzīghumuq, on 18 August 1721 he took by storm the commercial city of Shamākhī, massacring thousands of Shīʿīs.[7] In the sack of Shamākhī several resident Russian merchants were killed. Others, among them Matvei Evreinov, reputedly the wealthiest merchant in Russia, suffered heavy losses.[8]

As soon as the news reached Artemii Volynskii, now governor of Astrakhan, he informed the Tsar that Dāʾūd Khān and Surkhāʾī Khān had conquered Shamākhī and asked the Sunnī Ottoman Turkish Sultan to accept them as his subjects and send troops to protect the areas they had occupied.[9] Volynskii urged the Tsar to intervene. Conditions would never be more favourable. Persian territory could be occupied while the claim was made of fighting the common enemies of Russia and Iran. If the Persians protested, a promise to withdraw could be made, conditional on the payment of an indemnity. In December Peter replied that he agreed with Volynskii: orders had been issued for troops to gather at Astrakhan.[10]

The Iranian government could not have been aware of Peter's intentions. Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain and his ministers were ill-informed, ineffective men caught in a raging storm that they could neither understand nor control. The Afghan rebellion was the climax of a long series of disturbances which had been plaguing Iran for decades. In Dāghistān, Āẕarbāījān, Khurāsān, Kurdistān, and elsewhere, central authority had gradually atrophied and the Shah's will had ceased to be enforced. The Empire was breaking up, each constituent part

[6] I.P. Petrushevskii, "Azerbaidzhan", *Ocherki istorii S. S. S. R., Rossiia vo vtoroi chetverti XVIII veka* (Moscow, 1957), pp. 700–2. Hereafter cited as *Ocherki.*

[7] B. Kafengauz, *Vneshniaia politika pri Petre I*, p. 79. [8] Solov'ev, IX, p. 373.

[9] Ts. G. A. D. A., Kabinet Petra I, otd. II, kn. 54, 1. 667, cited in V.P. Lystsov and V.A. Aleksandrov, p. 605. [10] Solov'ev, IX, p. 374.

seeking to protect its own immediate interest or at least to ensure itself against disaster.

Ḥusain Qulī Khān, the Vālī (governor) of Georgia, better known as Wakhtang VI, who had been earlier mistreated by the Shah and had sworn never to fight for the Safavid dynasty, sent emissaries to Saint Petersburg with proposals for joint Georgian–Russian action against the Persians.[11] There is no evidence that the Shah knew of this move or would have done anything about it if he had known. The passivity of the government, its inability to organize resistance to invaders, its disorganization were such that in effect the country was left without an active foreign policy.

The Russian decision to invade Iran's Caspian provinces was greatly reinforced by the news that Maḥmūd, son of Mīr Vais, had reached Iṣfahān at the head of his Afghan tribesmen. Less than a month later Russian troops began the march to Astrakhan, the Tsar himself arriving there on 29 June 1722. Simultaneously, instructions were sent to Semyon Avramov, Russian consul in Iran, to tell Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain, or his successor, that the Russians were marching to Shamākhī not to make war on Persia but to eradicate the rebels. Avramov was to offer Iran help in expelling and subduing all her enemies, provided she ceded to Russia certain provinces along the Caspian Sea. Russia knew that a weak Iran would fall victim to Turkish occupation but had no wish to see the Caspian shores in Ottoman hands. Without an agreement with Iran, Russia would be unable to help her but would still take the Caspian provinces "because we cannot admit the Turks there".[12]

Avramov transmitted the Tsar's message to Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain's son and heir, Ṭahmāsp, who had found refuge from the Afghans in the northern provinces. However, the consul said nothing about the cession of Caspian provinces as compensation for Russian aid to Persia. The topic could not be broached because of "the frozen haughtiness and pride" of the Persians. Avramov reported that Ṭahmāsp was being betrayed by the khans who should have been his henchmen. He could not raise more than four hundred men for his army. Ismāʿīl Beg, whom Ṭahmāsp had appointed ambassador to Russia, with tears in his eyes told Avramov: "Our faith and our law are being utterly destroyed, yet the mendacity and pride of our lords do not diminish".[13]

While Avramov conducted negotiations with the fugitive claimant to the Safavid throne, Russian troops were attacking Persian fortresses on the western

[11] Lang, pp. 110–12. [12] Solov'ev, IX, p. 381. [13] *Ibid.*, p. 382.

coast of the Caspian. The original plan of the campaign called for landings on the shore to be followed by an expedition inland, where Russians, Georgians, and Armenians would jointly attack Dāʾūd Khān in Shamākhī. Wakhtang VI of Georgia had gathered 30,000 men, the Armenians provided 10,000 more. However, the Russians, who met with serious difficulties soon after they occupied the fortress of Darband, did not appear.

In early September they lost a large number of boats in a storm at sea. Without naval support it was impossible to supply land forces. An epidemic killed off the horses, virtually destroying the Russian cavalry. Disease and death spread among the troops who were not used to the hot and humid climate and did not know how to protect themselves. The Russians were therefore compelled to withdraw the bulk of their forces to Astrakhan, leaving behind a few garrisons near Tarqū, Darband, and Bākū, at fortresses such as that of the Holy Cross. Plans for an expedition inland were abandoned, leaving the Georgians and the Armenians to face Dāʾūd Khān on their own.[14] Wakhtang's participation in this abortive campaign was ultimately to cost him his throne, doom him to exile and put an end to his dynasty.

The abandonment of plans to conquer Shamākhī did not indicate that Peter had lost interest in Persia. In late autumn, 1722, taking further advantage of Ṭahmāsp's desperate situation, Russian forces entered Rasht ostensibly to help defend the city. In February 1723 the governor assured the Russians that their help was not needed, the Persians being able to protect themselves, and that Russian troops should leave. The Russian commander, Colonel Shipov, promised to send away his artillery and equipment first and then to withdraw. However, he failed to keep his promise and found himself under siege in the barracks. Late at night on 28 March 1723, a detachment of Russian troops crept through the Persian lines. The Russians attacked from two directions, taking the Persians by surprise. As the Persians fled, the Russians pursued, killing over one thousand men.[15]

Under the circumstances Shāh Ṭahmāsp had no choice but to negotiate. On 23 September 1723, his ambassador in Saint Petersburg, Ismāʿīl Beg, signed a humiliating treaty which stipulated that the Tsar would accord the Shah friendship and help against rebels, and would maintain the Shah "in tranquil possession" of his throne. In return the Shah promised permanently to cede to Russia:

[14] Lystsov and Aleksandrov, pp. 610–11.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 611. Solov'ev, IX, pp. 382–383.

... the towns of Darband [Derbend], Bākū, with all the territories belonging to them, as well as the provinces: Gīlān, Māzandarān, and Astarābād, so that they might support the forces which His Imperial Majesty will send to help His Shahian Majesty against his rebels, without demanding money for it.[16]

The text of the treaty was brought to Iran by Prince Boris Meshcherskii, a sub-lieutenant of the Preobrazhenskii guard regiment. When he and his suite entered Persia in April 1724 the population was fully aware of Russia's actions. Unruly mobs met Meshcherskii and his fellow-diplomat Avramov with violent threats. Shots were fired. The Shah received the Tsar's envoys with customary ceremoniousness but refused to ratify the treaty of Saint Petersburg. He knew by then that Russian forces on the Caspian were small and incapable of helping him expel the Afghans. He may also have known that Russia had entered negotiations with Iran's old enemy – the Porte.

Meshcherskii's return to Russia without a treaty precipitated a review of Russian policy toward Iran. The ministers suggested to the Tsar that Iran be informed of a proposed Russo-Turkish treaty. If Iran refused to ratify the agreement signed by Ismāʿīl Beg in Saint Petersburg, she would pit herself against two great powers and would surely perish. However, the Tsar decided against such a course of action, fearing that Iran might ratify the treaty and ask for military aid against the Turks, whose armies had moved into Transcaucasia and western Iran. It would be better to destroy the last vestiges of Ṭahmāsp's authority, either by persuading the Georgians in his entourage to abandon him, or by inducing them to kidnap him.[17]

The appearance of the Turks had greatly complicated an already confusing situation. The Ottoman Empire could ill afford the establishment of Russian power in Transcaucasia on both the Caspian and the Black Seas. After three wars with Peter, the Porte had emerged victorious. Russia had lost Azov at the mouth of the Don, the Crimea was secure, the Balkan Christians were quiet. A Russian conquest of Iran's Caspian provinces would drastically affect the balance of power and provide Russia with a base of operations from which to threaten the Armenian provinces of Anatolia.

To forestall such a development, the Porte informed Russia that Dāʾūd Khān the Lezghian and Maḥmūd, son of Mīr Vais the Afghan, had acknowledged the suzerainty of the Porte.

[16] Solov'ev, IX, p. 384.

[17] Russia's Foreign Policy Archive (AVPR), Relations between Russia and Persia, 1724, dossier 7; Solov'ev, IX, p. 385–6.

. . . it follows that the kingdom of Persia having fallen into the hands of Muslims, and the troubles and confusion having subsided, the provinces – those which are in the possession of Dāvūd Khān as well as those in the possession of the above-mentioned Mir Maḥmūd, have entered under the shadow of the protection of our most august and most puissant monarch . . .[18]

Moreover, the Russian Ambassador in Constantinople, I.I. Nepliuev, learned that the British were telling the Turks to beware of the Tsar who was collecting a large army in Dāghistān. The French Ambassador, the marquis de Bonnac, advised Nepliuev to report to his court that further intervention in Persian affairs would lead to war with Turkey; but Peter was not easily frightened, especially since he considered the acquisition of the Caspian littoral a necessary addition to the acquisition of the littoral of the Baltic. In April 1723, he wrote to Nepliuev that Russia would not permit any other power to establish itself on the Caspian Sea.[19]

Early the next year Constantinople learned of the conclusion of a treaty between Peter and Ṭahmāsp. In a conversation with Nepliuev held on 3 January 1724, the Raīs-effendi expressed surprise at such an action since in Ottoman eyes Iran no longer had a Shah but was a Turkish possession, and therefore the Tsar was signing treaties with some unknown person. Nepliuev maintained the legitimacy of Ṭahmāsp's title and the validity of the treaty of Saint Pertersburg. The two powers had reached a deadlock. However, behind the scenes the French ambassador worked feverishly to prevent war.[20] His mediation led to the conclusion on 24 June 1724 of a treaty between Russia and the Porte, dividing north-western Persia between the two powers in such a way as to leave the Caspian provinces of Iran in Russian hands, the Turks acquiring most of Āẕarbāījān and much of Transcaucasia. Peter undertook, moreover, "to see that Ṭahmāsp gives up, either voluntarily or under compulsion, all the provinces" acquired by the Turks.

But if Tahmasp should oppose stubbornly the implementation of this treaty and refuse to surrender the provinces already conquered by the Sublime Porte from the Persian Empire, as well as those on the Caspian Sea which he has granted to the Tsar under the treaties concluded between His Tsarist Majesty and Tahmasp, the Tsar and the Sublime Porte will take common action to place the Persian Empire, apart from the provinces already partitioned between themselves, under a ruler who shall possess it in perpetuity . . . But if Persia should undertake hostile action against any of the above-named

[18] Nolde, II, pp. 335–6. [19] Solov'ev, IX, pp. 397–8.
[20] Solov'ev, IX, pp. 399–400. For these events cf. Chapter 8, pp. 299–300.

provinces which the two Empires have conquered, the two Empires will unite to obtain redress with their combined forces.[21]

Now that the Persian state had virtually ceased to exist, the Tsar thought of the future. He was concerned for the safety of his newly acquired territories and ordered the fortifications at Holy Cross and Darband to be strengthened. He sought economic information, asking questions about preserved and dried fruit, copper, "white oil", and lemons, samples of which, cooked in sugar, had to be sent to him in Saint Petersburg. He was determined to attach Gīlān and Māzandarān permanently to Russia. In May 1724 the Tsar wrote to Matiushkin, Russian commander in Rasht, that he should invite "Armenians and other Christians, if there are such, to Gīlān and Māzandarān and settle them, while Muslims should be very quietly, so that they would not know it, diminished in number as much as possible". [22]

Yet the Tsar's Persian adventure was a failure. In spite of Iran's prostration, the campaign proved costly. Of the 61,039 men who took part in it 36,664 did not return.[23] Grave damage was inflicted on areas occupied by the Russians. Thus in Gīlān one of the consequences of occupation was the rapid decline of sericulture "when many of those involved in the production of silk fled the province. It took years for the industry to revive."[24] Perhaps the only long-term consequence was the consciousness on the part of Russia's rulers that their armies had once marched beyond the Caucasus, that the Russian flag had flown over the southern shore of the Caspian Sea.

Peter the Great died early in 1725. His immediate successors, the Empress Catherine I, a woman of far less intelligence and experience than Peter, and Peter II, a dissolute young boy, were much more interested in Holstein and Kurland than in Iran. Though the government quickly embarked upon a policy of retreat from the East, Shāh Ṭahmāsp was unable to take advantage of the change. Iran was still ruled by the Afghans, whose new leader, Ashraf, Iran's second Afghan ruler, had won some successes against the Turks and was seeking accommodation with Russia to consolidate his position. Before the Russians began negotiations with the new usurper, they had already decided that the seventeen infantry regiments and seven cavalry regiments still on duty in Persia would no longer be

[21] J.C. Hurewitz, I, p. 68.

[22] "Persidskaia voina 1722–1725 gg.", *Russkii Vestnik* LXVIII, pp. 603–6.

[23] Nolde, II, p. 335.

[24] M.A. Atkin, *The Khanates of the Eastern Caucasus and the Origins of the First Russo-Iranian War*, p. 43.

reinforced. Yet Ashraf made no demands. Quite the contrary. He was willing to recognize the treaty of Saint Petersburg which Shāh Ṭahmāsp had long ago repudiated. In February 1729 in Rasht a treaty was signed between Ashraf and the Russians, confirming the treaty of 1723 and exchanging Māzandarān and Astarābād, neither of which Russia ever held, for Shīrvān in the Caucasus. Russian merchants were granted free transit across Iran to Bukhārā and India.[25]

The treaty with Ashraf never came into force. Afghan power in Iran collapsed as quickly as it had arisen. Early in 1730 Shāh Ṭahmāsp, whose cause had revived with the support of Nādir, an Afshār tribesman, sent an envoy to Moscow. The purpose of the mission was to secure Russian support for the expulsion of the Afghans, even at the price of belatedly ratifying the treaty of Saint Petersburg and conceding to Russia the Caspian provinces. Ṭahmāsp was prepared to pay an exceedingly high price for help he no longer needed and Russia could not provide. In the negotiations in Moscow the Persian ambassador emphasized that if Iran received no Russian help against her enemies, Russia would have to give up all Persian territories, though friendship and commerce would not be affected.[26]

The Russian College (ministry) of Foreign Affairs discussed the entire range of problems raised by Shāh Ṭahmāsp's proposals. In a paper entitled "A Dissertation on Measures for a Successful Termination of Persian Affairs" presented to the new empress, Anna Ivanovna, the College stated that initially Russia and Turkey had undertaken to act in Iran with mutual consent. However, Ashraf's power had compelled the Turks to break their agreement with Russia and conclude a treaty with the Afghan chief without Russian acquiescence. Now Ashraf was defeated by the legitimate Shah who was likely to establish himself firmly on the throne. The Porte was arming for war to defend the territorial acquisitions she had made in Iran. The Turks were asking Russia to act in accordance with the treaty of 1724 and inviting joint action against Ṭahmāsp. However, while Russia, following the Ottoman example, had made her own peace with Ashraf, she never broke relations with Ṭahmāsp. War and occupation of Persian territory were costly and the advantages were far below original expectations. Russian commanders in Iran, Field Marshal Prince V.V. Dolgorukov and his successor, General V.I. Levashev, had already been instructed that if there appeared in Persia a ruler capable of maintaining himself

[25] N.I. Kazakov and G.A. Nekrasov, "Vostochnaia problema v 1725–1735 gg. Russko-turetskaia voina 1735–1739 gg. i vzaimootnosheniia Rossii s inostrannymi derzhavami vo vtoroi polovine 1730-kh godov." *Ocherki*, pp. 370–1. [26] Solov'ev, x, p. 272.

in power, Russia should make peace with him "even at the cost of ceding the occupied territories".[27]

The Empress approved the policy outlined by the College of Foreign Affairs and opened negotiations with Ṭahmāsp. Russian diplomats were most unfavourably impressed by conditions at the Persian court which they called "bad, astonishing, and depraved". Though the Persians were disunited and afraid of one another, they were full of pride and ambition that made them feel the wisest in the world. Such opinions from its diplomats, coupled with the news of a Persian defeat at Yerevan (Erivan), made the Russian government reverse its views, arrest the Persian ambassador in Moscow, and prepare for a resumption of hostilities.[28]

However, the fear that Ṭahmāsp might give in to the Turks or even enter an alliance with them induced the Russians to return to negotiations. V.I. Levashev and P.P. Shafirov, an outstanding diplomat, urged him not to permit Ottoman expansion at the expense of Persia, but to gather an army and use the services of Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān (the future Nādir Shāh). They were not optimistic.

> We doubt that our representations would succeed in view of his weakness after the defeat [by the Turks] and of his mad actions resulting from drunkenness. If he were not so debauched, had good commanders, and preserved order, with the numerical superiority of his forces over the Turkish forces he would have emerged victorious from the struggle.[29]

To prevent Ṭahmāsp from giving in to the Turks, Levashev and Shafirov sent an emissary to Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān (Nādir) to assure him of Russia's good will and urge him to act against the Ottomans.

Negotiations dragged on for more than a year. With the expulsion of the Afghans and the revival of the Iranian state it became clear to the Russians that withdrawal from the Caspian provinces was inevitable. On 1 February 1732, a treaty of peace, amity, and commerce was signed at Rasht, restoring Astarābād, Māzandarān, and Gīlān to Persia, and establishing regular commercial, diplomatic, and consular relations. Provinces north of the River Kur (Kura) were to remain in Russian hands until the Shah expelled his enemies (read the Turks) from all his domains.[30]

Events moved swiftly. Shāh Ṭahmāsp's incompetence finally cost him his throne. The brilliant warrior, Nādir, assumed the regency and the conduct of

[27] *Ibid.*, x, p. 273. [28] *Ibid.*, pp. 274–5. [29] *Ibid.*, p. 277.

[30] Kazakov and Kedrasov, *Ocherki*, Vtoraia chetvert' XVIII v., p. 372; Hurewitz, pp. 69–71; L. Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, chapters 2–8.

foreign affairs. Seeing in the Ottoman Empire Iran's main enemy, he went to war with the Turks, which was, of course, pleasing to Russia. Prince Sergei Dmitrievich Golitsyn was sent to Iran to prevent Nādir from making peace with the Turks. Before Golitsyn reached Iṣfahān in May 1734, he learned that peace had been made. Nevertheless, he attempted to influence Nādir by promising him Russian help against the Porte.

Nādir assumed a proud and independent stand. He told Golitsyn that if circumstances compelled him to break with the Turks, he would prevail without help from outside. He was angry because Russia made the return of Darband and Bākū conditional upon the liberation of all Iranian territories from the Turks, and went so far as to threaten to ally himself with Turkey and to march on Moscow. Yet he also promised to resume his campaigns against the Turks if Russia returned to Persia Darband and Bākū.[31]

When shortly thereafter Persian troops laid siege to Ganja, Golitsyn sent Nādir an engineer and four bombardiers in Persian attire. They were to help reduce the fortress, an art in which Nādir and his warriors had limited skill. Golitsyn also informed Nādir that the Empress was prepared to relinquish the remaining Persian territories on the sole condition that they never be surrendered to a third power. The Russian government felt somewhat uneasy about such concessions but hoped to compensate itself at Turkey's expense now that Nādir had once again resumed hostilities against the Porte.

Though unable to take Ganja quickly, Nādir attacked the Turks at Kars, defeating them in two major battles. This "favourable turn of events" prompted the Empress, who was anxious to start a war with Turkey, to conclude a definitive treaty with Iran in 1735, at Ganja, giving up all of the Petrine conquests, including Bākū, Darband, and even the fortress of the Holy Cross in the khanate of Tarqū. Thus came to an end the first serious encounter between Iran and Russia.

For nearly half a century thereafter Iran's relations with Russia were of small significance to either state. Nādir Shāh's foreign wars and domestic terror undermined the nation's economy and inflicted severe damage on the social order. His assassination brought no relief but plunged the country into a long period of internal dissension and anarchy. Even Karīm Khān Zand, much idealized by historians, did not create the base on which a modern state could be built. It was precisely in the years following the death of Nādir Shāh that the disparity between Iran and Russia grew to the extent that made it impossible for

[31] Solov'ev, x, p. 396.

Iran to withstand Russia in the first three decades of the 19th century. When Catherine II undertook to interfere in Transcaucasia and to dispute Iran's claims to Georgia, the enormous difference in the power of the two states was not yet obvious. By 1828 it was clear to all but the most foolish.

Of Nādir Shāh's successors not one had an explicit policy in regard to Russia. The ephemeral rulers who followed him had only the vaguest notion as to what Russia was and what could be expected of her. Karīm Khān Zand was no exception, neither was Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār. The Russian emperors and empresses who succeeded one another between 1725 and 1762 were no better informed about Iran. Catherine II was the best read of them all, yet she too had inadequate knowledge of Persia. Her advisors were deeply ignorant. Thus Platon Zubov, one of Catherine's favourites and a "self-proclaimed expert on Iran, was of the opinion that the Iranian new year's day, No Ruz, was May 14", and General Gudovich, after many years of service in the Caucasus, believed that the conflict between the Shīʿīs and the Sunnīs was of no importance.[32]

Catherine's interest in Iran was, on the one hand, a consequence of her Turkish policies and, on the other, the result of the view long prevalent in Europe that trade with India could make any nation rich. Pursuing schemes for the encirclement of the Ottoman Empire, Prince Grigorii Aleksandrovich Potemkin turned to the Caucasus where he hoped to create an Armenian state from the khanates of Qarābāgh, Qarājadāgh, Erivan (Yerevan) and Nakhchivān, "then add Ganjeh and other parts of Azerbāījān to Georgia, and use the two enlarged states as a bulwark against the Porte".[33] Potemkin's plan called for military intervention in the Caucasus in 1784, but the outbreak of war with Turkey the previous year made it necessary to use other means.

It was then that Russia approached ʿAlī Murād Khān Zand, one of the numerous contenders for the Persian crown, who had indicated that if Russia helped him against his rivals, he would be willing to give up to her certain territories in the north. Unknowingly ʿAlī Murād Khān was opening the door to foreign involvement in the problems of succession, an involvement which would increase with time and become a source of many difficulties. ʿAlī Murād Khān, who developed second thoughts about allying himself with Russia, died in 1785 without having made any serious commitments.[34]

Anarchy in Iran provided Russia with opportunities to penetrate the Caucasus and to re-establish her power on the Persian shores of the Caspian. In Transcaucasia her principal ally was Christian Georgia, whose ruler, King

[32] Atkin, *op cit.*, pp. 21–2. [33] Atkin, *op cit.*, p. 17. [34] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

Erekle II, constantly begged Catherine for protection against his Muslim neighbours. Along the Caspian the Russians began to cultivate local rulers, established a fortified depot near Rasht and, in 1781, landed near Astarābād. Count Voinovich, head of the expedition, was instructed by the Empress to create a fortified base in the Gulf of Astarābād to protect merchants against raids by Transcaspian Turcomans. The Russian historian V.A. Potto writes that the Voinovich expedition was closely connected with Catherine's plans for the conquest of the northern provinces of Persia.[35]

Russia chose Astarābād because of its strategic location on the trade route to Bukhārā and India, whose attraction Catherine II felt as strongly as had Peter I half a century earlier. Astarābād was considered particularly suitable because Valerian Zubov believed it to be "only about one thousand versts across the mountains" from India, or about half the actual distance.[36] Voinovich was instructed to obtain the co-operation of the ruler of Astarābād, Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār, another contender for the throne of Iran.

Āghā Muḥammad Khān was willing to promote international trade and to secure Russia's good will, which might prove useful in his struggle for power; but he was not prepared to see the erection of a fort large enough to hold 1,000 defenders. Later he claimed to have received a report that the Voinovich expedition was directed against him. Strong willed and resolute, Āghā Muḥammad Khān acted at once. The members of the Russian expedition were arrested and expelled from Iran. Catherine never forgave this offence against her, and told Zubov fifteen years later that Āghā Muḥammad must be punished for it.[37]

Āghā Muḥammad Khān did not permit feelings to interfere with political calculation. Having expelled the Russians, he had no desire to exacerbate his relations with them. In 1783 he sent an envoy to Saint Petersburg in an attempt to ease tensions between himself and the Empress. She refused to receive his ambassador and sent him back with a note that she did not consider Āghā Muḥammad Khān the legitimate ruler of Māzandarān and Astarābād, and that his actions had put him in danger of "stern punishment".[38] In spite of the insult and of the deep suspicion with which he regarded Russia since the Voinovich incident, Āghā Muḥammad Khān continued to seek a *modus vivendi* with the Empress.

[35] V.A. Potto, *Kavkazskaia voina v otdel'nykh ocherkakh, epizodakh, legendakh i biografiiakh* I, p. 154.
[36] Zubov, "Notes on Trade with Asia", *Akty* VI, ii, p. 861.
[37] Atkin, *The Khanates*, p. 50; cf. her *Russia and Iran*, p. 33.
[38] P.G. Butkov, *Materialy* II, p. 95; Atkin, *The Khanates*, p. 55; *Russia and Iran*, pp. 34–5.

One of his rivals in northern Iran was Hidāyat-Allāh Khān, who owed his position as ruler of Gīlān to Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Qājār, Āghā Muḥammad's father. After Muḥammad Ḥasan's death, Hidāyat-Allāh owed allegiance to Kārīm Khān and ʿAlī Murād Zand. In 1781–2 he refused to submit to Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār and was driven into exile in Shīrvān. Returning four years later, he again antagonized the formidable Āghā Muḥammad by sheltering the latter's rebel brother, Murtaẓā Qulī Khān. Imagining Russian suzerainty less severe, Hidāyat-Allāh asked for Russia's protection. The Russians asked him to pay token tribute, to surrender to them his son as hostage, and to cede to Russia the port of Anzalī (Enzeli). Since Āghā Muḥammad had turned his attention elsewhere, Hidāyat-Allāh felt no compulsion to accept such terms.

Offended by Hidāyat-Allāh's behaviour, the Russian consul in Anzalī urged Āghā Muḥammad Khān to attack Gīlān. Āghā Muḥammad was happy to eliminate a rival. He quickly defeated Hidāyat-Allāh who took refuge aboard a Russian ship. The Russians surrendered the unfortunate Hidāyat-Allāh to his mortal enemy, the Khan of Shaft, who promptly put him to death.[39]

However, relations between the victorious Qājār and the Russians deteriorated again when Āghā Muḥammad, accusing the Russian consul of having secretly appropriated Hidāyat-Allāh's treasure, demanded payment of 2,000,000 roubles. The Russians refused. In retaliation Āghā Muḥammad imposed a tariff on Russian imports. On their part the Russians began to support Āghā Muḥammad's brother and rival, Murtaẓā Qulī Khān, who was willing to cede Anzalī and to promise the submission to Russia of Gīlān, Māzandarān, and Astarābād. For a short time he received minor military assistance from the Russians. Later they subsidized him and permitted him to live in Russia as a refugee.[40]

In the closing decades of the 18th century Georgia was a more important element in Russo-Persian relations than Astarābād or even Gīlān. Unlike Peter I, Catherine viewed Georgia as the pivot of her Caucasian policy, for Georgia could be used as a base of operations against both Iran and the Ottoman Empire. Moreover, a port on the Georgian coast of the Black Sea would provide great advantages to the Russian navy. Catherine invoked the example of Peter the Great, but only as a justification for decisions and policies arrived at on other grounds.[41]

Georgia had broken away from Iran at the time of the Afghan invasion. King Wakhtang would not come to the rescue of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain. Both paid a

[39] Atkin, *The Khanates*, pp. 51–5; *Russia and Iran*, p. 34.

[40] *Idem.*, *The Khanates*, p. 57; *Russia and Iran*, p. 35.

[41] *Idem.*, *The Khanates*, p. 11.

heavy price for their enmity: both lost their thrones, one dying in exile, the other in captivity. Nādir Shāh restored Persian suzerainty over Georgia. The young and brilliant ruler of Kakhetʾi-Kʾartʾli, Erekle II, who accompanied him in many battles and earned his admiration, was able to maintain Georgia's autonomy through the Zand period. When threatened from outside, Erekle asked for Russian protection, which became especially desirable because of the Ottoman threat. General Count Pavel Sergeevich Potemkin, commander of Russian troops north of the Caucasus, urged Erekle to recognize Catherine's suzerainty over Georgia. In July 1783 at the fortress of Georgievsk the kingdom of Kʾartʾli-Kakhetʾi, the principal Georgian state, was placed under Russian protection. In November 1784 a token detachment of Russian troops entered Tbilisi (Tiflis) and King Erekle swore allegiance to the Empress.[42]

The arrival of Russian forces in Georgia upset the delicate and unstable balance of power among the Turks, the Georgians, the Persians, and the Āẕarbāījānī khans of Transcaucasia. Turkey communicated her fears to France whose ambassador in Saint Petersburg, Louis-Philippe de Ségure, remonstrated with Prince G.A. Potemkin and gained from him the impression that Russia was prepared to defend her new acquisition by force. Such, however, was not the case. With the start of another Russo-Turkish war in 1787 the Russian troops were withdrawn from Georgia, leaving Erekle to defend his country as best he could.

In the next several years Russia was too concerned with Turkey, Poland, and the European consequences of the French revolution to give Georgia much attention. Even the consolidation of the power of Āghā Muḥammad Khān, who had gradually emerged as the sole ruler of Iran, did not divert the Empress from her preoccupation with the West. In 1791, when Āghā Muḥammad was in Tabrīz, Erekle asked General I.V.Gudovich, Russian commander of the Caucasian Line, for military aid, but Saint Petersburg did not judge it expedient to send troops to Georgia.[43]

For Āghā Muḥammad Khān the reintegration of Georgia into the Iranian Empire was part of the same process that had brought Shīrāz, Iṣfahān, Tabrīz, and Kirmān under his rule. Georgia was a province of Iran like Khurāsān. Its permanent secession was inconceivable and had to be resisted in the same way as one would resist an attempt at the separation of Fārs or Gīlān. It was, therefore, natural for Āghā Muḥammad to make every effort to subdue the khans of Āẕarbāījān and put down what in Iranian eyes was treason on the part of the Vālī

[42] V.D. Dondua and N.A. Berdzenishvili, "Gruziia", *Ocherki*, Rossia vo vtoroi polovine XVIII veka, pp. 731–2. Lang, pp. 183–86. [43] Lang, p. 213.

of Georgia. Cruel, suspicious and bloodthirsty even by the standards of his time and place, Āghā Muḥammad conducted the reunification of Iran with a total disregard for human life. Dreadful massacres were the usual accompaniment of his conquests; smoking ruins marked the path of his troops. In 1795 Georgia, abandoned by Russia, fell to Āghā Muḥammad's cavalry and experienced the full force of his wrath. Tbilisi (Tiflis) was sacked. Ten to fifteen thousand persons, mostly children and adolescents, were led away to captivity in Iran. After only a week Āghā Muḥammad was gone.

Upon learning of the fall of Tbilisi General I.V. Gudovich put the blame on the Georgians themselves. He also proposed a plan for the invasion of Iran. With the encouragement of the Zubov brothers Catherine adopted the proposal and put Valerian Zubov in charge, thus giving additional importance to the enterprise. The objective of the campaign was the overthrow of Āghā Muḥammad Khān and his replacement with the tame Qājār, Murtażā Qulī. An air of optimism pervaded Saint Petersburg. Before he left for the Caucasus in January 1796, Valerian Zubov boasted to F.V. Rostopchin that he would be in Iṣfahān by September.[44]

Catherine and Āgha Muḥammad were not fated to see their armies meet. The Empress's death brought Tsar Paul to the throne. Paul's dislike of his mother extended not only to her favourites but to her policies as well. The Zubov brothers were dismissed and the troops recalled from the Caucasus. Āghā Muḥammad Khān, the recently crowned Shah of Iran, was jubilant, attributing Russia's retreat from Georgia to the fear he thought he inspired in all his enemies. Nothing stood between him and the helpless Georgians. In mid June 1797, three days after he had occupied Shūsha, Āghā Muḥammad Khān was murdered in his tent. The Persian army fell apart. Khans, military commanders, provincial governors, all expected another struggle for succession, perhaps another period of anarchy, but this time there was to be no anarchy. Āghā Muḥammad Khān's favourite nephew and designated heir, Bābā Khān, mounted the throne with relative ease as Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh.

At the beginning of his reign, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, not yet secure in his position, sought improved relations with Russia. Tsar Paul received Iran's peaceful overtures favourably, making it possible to settle a number of outstanding issues amicably. Thus he agreed that Russian warships should not enter the port of Anzalī needlessly; that Russian merchants pay duty on goods imported into Iran; that the export to Iran of 18,000 tons of iron, a prohibited item, be

[44] Atkin, *The Khanates*, p. 138; cf. *Russia and Iran*, p. 32.

permitted. Paul was determined to protect Georgia, but he was anxious to negotiate with the new ruler whom he regarded as only one of several contenders for the Persian throne and to whom he continued to refer in official correspondence as Sardār Bābā Khān even after Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh had been crowned on 21 March 1798.[45]

Minor improvements in relations between Iran and Russia could not disguise the essential fact that short of a Persian surrender of Georgia, peace could not be preserved. Yet it was impossible for any Persian who had ambitions to rule the whole of Iran rather than govern a section, – as Shāhrukh, Nādir's grandson in Mashhad, had done, or Karīm Khān Zand – to abandon Transcaucasia, an area which had formed part of the concept of Iran for centuries. The ancient ties could be severed only by a superior force from outside. It was therefore inevitable that Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh should continue Āghā Muḥammad Khān's policy of restoring central authority beyond the rivers Aras and Kur.

In the summer of 1798 the Shah wrote to Giorgi XII, the new king of Kʾartʾli-Kakhetʾi, commanding him to submit.

> Our lofty standard will proceed to your lands and, just as occurred in the time of Agha Mohammed Khan, so now you will be subjected to doubly increased devastation, and Georgia will again be annihilated, and the Georgian people given over to our wrath.[46]

Once again the King of Georgia appealed for protection to the Tsar. Paul listened with sympathy. His policy in Europe was undergoing a change that made him contemplate anti-French action in an alliance with Turkey. Napoleon's Egyptian campaign drew Paul's attention to the Middle East, and imparted a fresh urgency to old schemes of dominating Georgia. He ordered a small force to proceed there, making inevitable renewed conflict with Iran. In September 1799 Giorgi formally requested the Emperor to establish a protectorate over Georgia. Two months later Russian troops entered Tiflis, to the cheers of the inhabitants.

Petr Ivanovich Kovalenskii, the Tsar's envoy, assumed control of Georgia's foreign relations and informed the Shah of Russia's determination to defend her client. In reply Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Shīrāzī, the prime minister, reaffirmed Iran's sovereignty over Georgia, threatened to enforce it with troops, and left no doubt of the position of his government, to whom Paul's latest actions appeared as a continuation of the aggression initiated by his late mother. The subsequent death of King Giorgi, the abolition of Georgia's monarchy, and her outright

[45] *Idem.*, *The Khanates*, pp. 168ff.; *Russia and Iran*, pp. 56–7.

[46] A.A. Tsagareli, *Gramoty i drugie istoricheskie dokumenty XVIII stoletiia otnosiashchiesia do Gruzii* (Saint Petersburg, 1891–1902), II, Part 2, p. 182, translated in Lang, p. 227.

annexation to Russia could only be interpreted in Tehran as the opening of a general offensive that would, unless checked by force, tear away from Iran some of her fairest provinces.

The need for assistance against Russia made Iran willing to contemplate alliances with European states. Emissaries of revolutionary France had appeared in Tehran as early as 1796, when Āghā Muḥammad Khān was campaigning in Khurāsān. Jean-Guillaume Bruguières and Guillaume-Antoine Olivier, both of whom believed in private that Āghā Muḥammad was a cruel despot and his attack on Tiflis merely a looting expedition, warned Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Shīrāzī against Russian encroachment on Georgia and advised resistance. French attempts to enlist Iran as a collaborator against Russia and Britain alarmed the British whose hold on India was still uncertain. Captain John Malcolm's mission resulted in the conclusion of an Anglo-Persian treaty directed against possible French penetration of the Middle East. Napoleon's offer of alliance, brought to Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh by Colonel Romieu, was ignored in spite of the French promise of support against Russia.[47]

Tehran's diplomatic maneuvering had no effect on Saint Petersburg. The assassination of Tsar Paul in March 1801 only accelerated the growth of anti-Persian sentiment. Alexander I quickly restored Catherine's friends Platon and Valerian Zubov to positions of influence. Valerian was particularly insistent that the annexation of Georgia was a moral obligation. To him the frontier between Russia and Iran should be drawn along the Kur and Aras rivers, which implied the conquest of the khanates to the east and the south of Georgia. Alexander shared such views. Moreover, like most Russians of his day, he had a low opinion of the Persians and nothing but contempt for the Muslims of the Caucasus.

The appointment in 1802 of Prince Pavel Dmitrievich Tsitsianov as commander-in-chief in the Caucasus marked the acceleration of Russian expansion. In spite of his Georgian origins, Tsitsianov was a strong Russian imperialist. His "Europeanism" had the convert's ardour, and his loathing for the "Asiatics" or "Persians", terms he used interchangeably, was intense. He denounced "Asiatic" intrigue while acting treacherously toward the khans; fulminated against "Asiatic" brutality while massacring Muslims; deplored "Asiatic" manners, while writing to a local chieftain, "you have a dog's soul and a donkey's mind . . . So long as you do not become a faithful tributary of my lord, the Emperor, I shall harbour the desire to clean my boots in your blood." Uniformly praised by

[47] Aḥmad Tājbakhsh, *Tārīkh-i ravābiṭ-i Īrān va Rūsīya*, p. 27. For further details, see Chapter 11, pp. 377–80.

Russian historians, and frequently admired by Europeans, Tsitsianov was, to the Persians and Caucasian Muslims, "the blood-letter".[48]

Tsitsianov proceeded systematically to impose Russian rule on the territories adjacent to Georgia. Some khanates, among them Bākū, Shakkī, Shīrvān, and Qarābāgh, submitted; others, such as Ganja and Erivan, refused, exposing themselves to military attack. Tsitsianov was not even content with the Aras–Kur line as the proposed Russo-Persian border. He actively worked for the annexation of Khūy, Tabrīz, and Gīlān, and opposed every attempt at a peaceful settlement of the conflict between his country and Iran.

Tsitsianov's attack on Ganja was a challenge to ʿAbbās Mīrzā, heir to the Persian throne and governor of Āẕarbāījān. The capture of the city was accompanied by a massacre in which the Russians killed between 1,500 and 3,000 people. Among the victims were 500 Muslims who had taken refuge in a mosque but were slaughtered nevertheless as an act of revenge, said Platon Zubov.[49] The town was sacked, its main mosque was converted into a church, and its very name obliterated by being changed to Elizavetpol. Thousands of local inhabitants fled to Iran, spreading the news and arousing fear among the Persians. In Tsitsianov's attack on Ganja the Iranians saw a direct invasion of their country's territory. The issue was no longer one of imposing tribute on distant Lezghians or even reasserting Persian suzerainty over Christian Georgia. The integrity of Shīʿī Iran had been violated. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, ʿAbbās Mīrzā, and their leading ministers feared that the fall of Āẕarbāījānī bastions would expose the rest of the empire to the Russians. Such a fear of Russian aggression, of continued Russian expansion, of the imposition of alien rule, explains the emotional intensity of the Iranian response, and the way in which the clergy and the educated classes encouraged resistance.

In the spring of 1804 Tsitsianov threatened Muḥammad Khān of Erivan, demanding that he recognize the Russian candidate as Catholicos of the Armenian Church at nearby Echmiadzin, give hostages, pay 80,000 roubles of tribute annually, and surrender to the Russians all military supplies. Muḥammad Khān, whose family was held hostage in Iran, vacillated. At the end of June Tsitsianov appeared before Erivan with 3,000 Russian infantry and Georgian and Armenian auxiliaries. Almost simultaneously ʿAbbās Mīrzā arrived at the head of a Persian force of some 18,000 horsemen. The opening battle of the first Russo-Persian war was fought on 1 July with indecisive results.

Contrary to Russian hopes and expectations, the war proved long, arduous

[48] *Akty* II, No. 1414. Atkin, *The Khanates*, p. 228; *Russia and Iran*, p. 73.
[49] Atkin, *The Khanates*, p. 259; *Russia and Iran*, pp. 82–3.

and costly. A year after the start of hostilities, the Russian government, now at war with Napoleon against whom Tsar Alexander personally led an army, was prepared to negotiate a peace settlement. Count Adam Czartoryski informed Tsitsianov of the possibility. Tsitsianov's reaction was entirely negative. He bombarded the government with arguments that peace with Iran was neither possible nor desirable. The Persians must be punished for having dared to resist. Later he repeatedly expressed the opinion that the Shah would not in any event make peace.[50] Tsitsianov, who exercized enormous influence over the Tsar, offered his own "peace" plan. It included a campaign against Gīlān, a foray as far as Qazvīn, and insults to the Shah, who was to be told that if he gave up the Caucasus down to the Aras and paid an indemnity of 1,000,000 roubles, Iran would be saved and Tehran spared destruction.[51] Soon after Tsitsianov himself perished in the war he had so vigorously promoted, the victim of a trap set for him by one of the despised "Asiatics", or "Persians", Ḥusain Qulī Khān of Bākū.

Whatever hopes the Shah might have had of British assistance vanished at the outset of the war because England was now Russia's ally against Napoleon. However, the French were anxious to enter onto the scene. In May 1807 at Finkenstein in Prussia, Iran and France signed a treaty of alliance openly directed against Russia. Article 2 proclaimed that "H. M. the Emperor of the French, King of Italy, guarantees to H. M. the Emperor of Persia the integrity of his present territory." Article 3 stated: "H. M. the Emperor of the French, King of Italy, recognizes Georgia as belonging legitimately to H. M. the Emperor of Persia." Napoleon promised to make every effort to compel Russia to withdraw from Georgia, and to help reorganize the Persian army "in accordance with principles of European military art". In return Iran would go to war with England, urge the Afghans to attack India, and permit the free passage of French troops should Napoleon decide to send an expedition to India.[52]

To implement the treaty Napoleon sent a military mission to Iran under General C.M. de Gardane. The mission had not yet arrived at its destination when Napoleon defeated Russia and at Tilsit forced upon Alexander a humiliating treaty, making Russia his reluctant ally. Thereupon the Emperor of the French quickly lost interest in Iran. General Gardane managed to hang on in Tehran till he eventually had to leave when a British mission arrived in the capital to conclude yet another treaty. French attempts to mediate between

[50] See various documents in *Akty* II, pp. 812ff.
[51] Atkin, *The Khanates*, p. 312. cf. *Russia and Iran*, passim.
[52] Hurewitz, No. 51, pp. 186–7.

Russia and Persia were doomed to failure because Alexander would not relinquish Georgia and Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh would not accept its loss. Napoleon had neither the will nor the means to compel agreement. The Franco-Persian alliance was annulled. Britain promised to assist Iran in any war with a European power, provided Iran were not the aggressor, a stipulation certain to lead to contradictory interpretations.[53] The war in the Caucasus dragged on for several more years. With Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812, Russia and Britain became allies once more. Iran was largely isolated. The defeat of Napoleon enabled Russia to allocate greater resources to the Caucasian front. The difference between modern, well-drilled, well-equipped, disciplined armies and the tribal levies of ʿAbbās Mīrzā was decisive. At Asländūz on the Aras 2,260 Russians under General P.S. Kotliarevskii fought a two-day battle with 30,000 Persians under ʿAbbās Mīrzā, killing 1,200 enemy soldiers, and capturing 537 at a loss to themselves of only 127 dead and wounded. Though on occasion the Persians fought well, for instance at Lankarān, where the same Kotliarevskii lost 950 of 1,500 men under his command and was himself permanently disabled, the war was obviously lost.

British mediation made it possible for the two sides to negotiate a peace treaty which was signed on 14 October 1813, at the village of Gulistān. By its terms Iran lost many of its Caucasian provinces: Qarābāgh and Ganja, Shīrvān and Bākū, Georgia and parts of Ṭālish. No power other than Russia was permitted warships on the Caspian Sea. This provision left the Persian shores vulnerable to Russian attack. The treaty also dealt with commercial matters and with the establishment of permanent diplomatic missions. Perhaps the most dangerous provisions of the Gulistān treaty were those that promised Russian recognition and support of the legitimate heir to the Persian throne and those which delineated the border between the two states. These provisions were so vague as to invite misinterpretation and conflict.

It is likely that neither the Shah nor the Tsar regarded the treaty of Gulistān as definitive. ʿAbbās Mīrzā considered it merely a truce and prepared for another war.[54] In the interim the Persian government sent Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān Shīrāzī, formerly ambassador in London, to Saint Petersburg to plead for the rectification of the frontier, particularly in areas where Russian troops had advanced beyond the original demarcation line, as happened in Ṭālish, for instance. Russia's foreign minister, Count Karl von Nesselrode, rejected Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān's plea. However, the Russian government was prepared to make minor

[53] Tājbakhsh, pp. 44–5. Cf. Chapter 11, pp. 381–5. [54] Tājbakhsh, p. 62.

concessions. In 1817 it sent the new Commander-in-Chief in the Caucasus, General A.P. Ermolov, to Tehran.

Ermolov was no peace-maker. Arrogant, tyrannical, filled with contempt for "Asiatics", he was dedicated to the expansion of Russia and firmly committed to violence as a means of achieving his ends. His conquests, his punitive expeditions, his savage inhumanity struck hatred and fear into all those whom his power could reach. In spite of specific instructions to make an attempt at settling the issues outstanding between the two states, Ermolov behaved as if he had been sent to Iran to provoke war. His very passage from the frontier to Tabrīz and Tehran turned into military reconnaissance.

In his dealings with the Persians Ermolov deliberately violated the rules of etiquette, refusing to take off his shoes and to put on red socks before entering the presence of the Shah or the heir to the throne. When it was pointed out to him that the French and British envoys complied with the custom, he "categorically refused to fulfil ᶜAbbās Mīrzā's demand, stating", quite illogically, "that he had come 'not with the sentiment of a Napoleon-spy [sic], not with profit calculations of a store-clerk from a merchandizing nation', but with sincere intentions to improve Russo-Iranian relations".[55]

Ermolov put before the Shah a series of requests which, coming from him, assumed the character of demands. Russia wanted an alliance with Iran against the Porte, free passage for Russian troops through Astarābād to Central Asia to fight Khivans and Bukhārāns who plundered Russian merchants, the opening of a permanent Russian consulate in Gīlān, and the employment of Russian officers to train the Persian army. Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh, unwilling to break with the Ottomans, was evasive about the alliance but turned down all the other proposals. When he asked Ermolov for territorial concessions, the general replied that the areas in question had been conquered by the sword and not one inch would be returned to Iran.[56] In a report to Saint Petersburg, written upon his return to Tiflis, Ermolov argued against restoring any territory to Iran because the slightest concession would shake Russia's prestige among the peoples of the Caucasus.[57]

Ermolov's opposition to the improvement of relations with Persia continued over the years. In 1818 ᶜAbbās Mīrzā sent Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān to Saint Petersburg with gifts for the Tsar and the request that Alexander I recognize ᶜAbbās Mīrzā as heir to the throne. Ermolov advised against recognition, but the Tsar disregarded the advice. Undaunted, Ermolov became a champion of Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā, who was ᶜAbbās Mirzā's elder half-brother but was

[55] F. Abdullaev, p. 59. [56] Tājbakhsh, pp. 68–70. [57] Abdullaev, p. 57.

excluded from succession because his mother was a commoner. Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā's frustration and envy made him willing to serve any party that opposed ʿAbbās Mīrzā.[58] Several years later, Count Ivan Fedorovich Paskevich, himself an imperialist and a proponent of conquests, submitted to Nesselrode a report in which he challenged Ermolov's Iranian policy. Paskevich, whose expert advisor was the brilliant playwright Aleksandr Sergeevich Griboedov, found that Ermolov's support of Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā was harmful and his general attitude partly responsible for the outbreak of the second Russo-Iranian war.[59]

Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh and ʿAbbās Mīrzā placed high hopes in the efficacy of the Anglo-Persian treaty of 1814 which promised Iran either a force from India or a yearly subsidy if Iran became a victim of aggression by a European power. British officers were already drilling ʿAbbās Mīrzā's troops, helping him and his capable minister, Mīrzā Abuʾl-Qāsim Qāʾim-Maqām, to modernize the army, though no one in Iran seemed to have a true picture of the vast inequality of economic, demographic and technological resources between Russia and Persia. The lessons of 1804–13 had not been learnt.

In the years preceding the second Russo-Iranian war Russia followed two mutually contradictory policies. Saint Petersburg was cautious and slow, while Ermolov was provocative and impulsive. The death of Alexander I, the military mutiny of December 1825 in the capital, and the uncertainties felt by the new Tsar, made his government wish to explore the possibility of reaching an understanding with Iran. Nicholas I sent Prince A.S. Menshikov ostensibly to inform the Shah of the new Tsar's accession. The Prince was also to try making arrangements for the stabilization of the frontier. Yet Menshikov, like Ermolov, was not prepared for substantive concessions. His mission failed as a wave of anti-Russian sentiment fanned by the *ʿulamā* swept the country.

The steady encroachment of Russian troops along the frontier in the Caucasus, Ermolov's brutal punitive expeditions and misgovernment, drove large numbers of Muslims, and even some Georgian Christians, into exile in Iran. Āqā Sayyid Muḥammad Iṣfahānī, a prominent *mujtahid* in Karbalā, agitated for *jihād*. In June 1826, the time of Menshikov's visit, a number of prominent ʿulamā waited on the Shah at Sulṭāniya. The clergy issued a *fatvā* declaring that opposition to jihād was a sign of unbelief.[60]

Subject to this wave of clerical pressure, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh treated Menshikov coldly. Perhaps the Persian ruler, as a perceptive Russian visitor pointed out, thought

[58] *Ibid.*, p. 65. [59] For Paskevich's report see *Akty* II, pp. 541–2.
[60] Hamid Algar, *Religion and State in Iran, 1785–1906*, p. 89.

that the internal disorders which occurred in the bosom of our fatherland and the rivalry of two brothers seeking the throne forced the Sovereign to take such humble action and seek the protection or the help of the Persian court.[61]

Whatever Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's analysis of the situation may have been, his actions were not calculated to win over the overbearing and tactless Menshikov.

On his side of the border Ermolov watched the progress of Russo-Iranian negotiations. In January 1826 Nicholas I, preoccupied with the Turkish question and the fate of the Balkans, wrote to the commander-in-chief in the Caucasus that

> It would not be wise to contemplate a rupture with the Persians or to increase mutual dissatisfaction. On the contrary, we must make every attempt amicably to terminate the quarrels that have arisen and assure them of our sincere desire to establish peaceful ties with them.[62]

Ermolov disregarded the wishes of the Tsar.

In May 1826 Russian troops occupied and fortified Mirak, a locality in the Erivan khanate. The Persians protested against the new encroachment just as they protested against Russia's advance in the area of lake Gokcha. Mīrzā Muḥammad Ṣādiq, whom the Iranian government sent to Saint Petersburg to discuss the issue, was detained by Ermolov in Tiflis. Meanwhile the Russian occupation of Mirak effectively closed the Persian border and disrupted Erivan's commerce.[63] Goaded by Ermolov, ʿAbbās Mīrzā struck on 28 July 1826. However, of Ermolov his eventual successor in the post of commander-in-chief in the Caucasus, General Paskevich, wrote that "the present chief's ambition produced the new war – in this everyone is agreed".[64]

At the onset Iranian troops achieved considerable success. Ermolov displayed strange passivity and was eventually removed from his command. A Persian corps approached Tiflis, other Persian detachments advanced along the Caspian shore. Then the Russians moved in their reserves. Denis Davydov, the famous cavalry leader of the Napoleonic war, barred the way to Tiflis. General V.G. Madatov utterly defeated the army led by Muḥammad Mīrzā, the future Shah. ʿAbbās Mīrzā himself was badly beaten by Paskevich at Ganja. Sooner or later the Iranians had to realize that they could not defeat Russia in war. Their newly modernized army was no match for Russian troops led by veterans of Smolensk, Borodino and Leipzig. This time the struggle was short and the outcome decisive.

[61] N. Murav'ev, *Russkii arkhiv* IV (1889), p. 583. [62] I. K. Enikolopov, p. 44.
[63] *Ibid.*, p. 45. [64] Abdullaev, p. 83.

The treaty signed by the two states at Turkmānchai on 22 February 1828 recorded in an international document the new inequality of status between Iran and Russia. To the territories lost by the treaty of Gulistān were now added the khanates of Erivan and Nakhchivān. Iran agreed to pay Russia an indemnity of 20,000,000 roubles, a vast sum for a country with a primitive economy. All prisoners of war, no matter when captured, were to be returned. Iran was not to permit the many hundreds of Russian deserters who joined Persian forces, and even formed their own very effective battalion, to be stationed near the new frontier. The commercial treaty appended to the peace treaty accorded Russia further privileges and laid the basis of Russian influence in Iran. Russian subjects there were permitted to buy houses and shops which Iranian officials were prohibited from entering, "at least without having recourse in case of necessity to the authorization of the Russian Minister, Chargé d'Affaires or Consul".[65] Moreover a régime of capitulations was established, virtually exempting Russian subjects from Iranian jurisdiction. The Treaty of Turkmānchai set the tone for the relations between Russia and Iran for the next ninety years.

The Tsar appointed as his first post-war minister to Tehran A.S. Griboedov, the author of the sparkling comedy *Woe from Wit*. As a diplomat Griboedov was raised in the Ermolov–Paskevich school, though his native intelligence and personal refinement saved him from the excesses typical of an average imperialist. He set himself the goal "through long and uniform action, always correct and frank . . . to triumph over Asiatic suspicion and to turn into conviction on the part of Persia that fateful necessity which has compelled her to accept our peace conditions".[66] Griboedov also believed that Iran should be compelled to fight Turkey with whom Russia was then at war. The Tsar did not wish to endanger his relations with the British and the ministry of foreign affairs deleted from its instructions to Griboedov references to the minister's freedom, in case Russian and British policies clashed in Europe, to exercise anti-British influence, based upon the presence of Russian troops on the border and the availability to Griboedov of large sums of money.[67]

In the Ermolov tradition, Griboedov, who did not entirely agree with the "somnolent ministry of foreign and superannuated affairs", urged Paskevich to write directly to the Tsar that to "order him [ʿAbbās Mīrzā] to fight the Turks" and to promise that Russia would put him on the throne would cost her nothing,

[65] Hurewitz, No. 65, p. 236.
[66] A.S. Griboedov, *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* III, p. 272 as cited in S.V. Shostakovich, *Diplomaticheskaia*, p. 167. [67] Shostakovich, p. 171.

"yet our influence in Asia would overcome that of any other power".[68] Griboedov's behaviour in Tehran conformed to his beliefs in the uses of power. He offended the Persians by entering the Shah's presence with his boots on and sitting in a chair during audiences, but most of all by his ruthless implementation of Article 13 of the Treaty of Turkmānchai.

Griboedov not only extended protection to those Caucasian captives who sought to go home but actively promoted the return of even those who did not volunteer. Large numbers of Georgian and Armenian captives had lived in Iran since 1804 or as far back as 1795. Many had embraced Islam and married Persians. A few had risen to high positions at court and in the government. Persuading them to leave necessitated the invasion of Muslim households and the violation of the Persian notion of the sacredness of the home.[69] When Griboedov gave refuge in the Russian legation to one of the Shah's eunuchs, Ya^cqūb Markanian, and detained some women from the harem of the former prime minister, Allāhyār Khān Āṣaf al-Daula, rumours spread that Ya^cqūb had foresworn Islam and that the women were being forced to do the same.

It was the prominent Tehran mujtahid, Mīrzā Masīḥ, who precipitated the crisis by reminding the crowds that the penalty for apostates was death. He also sent a clerical delegation to the Ẓill al-Sulṭān, governor of Tehran, to demand that the Russians release the women they had extracted from the harems. In spite of being aware of the gravity of the situation Griboedov fanned the flames of Persian discontent. On 10 February, in a note to Mīrzā Ḥasan Khān, the foreign minister, he blustered: "The undersigned, having become convinced by the dishonest behaviour of the Persian government that Russian subjects cannot be assured . . . even of personal safety, will request the most gracious permission of his great Sovereign to leave Persia for the Russian borders".[70] That same night Manūchihr Khān Mu^ctamad al-Daula, a Tiflisi Armenian captured in 1804 who had risen to positions of great power, warned Griboedov of danger and advised him to leave the legation. Griboedov refused. The very next day an ugly crowd, inflamed by the ^culamā, attacked the Russian legation and massacred all but one member of its large staff.

The Russian government, not wishing to break relations with Iran while

[68] Griboedov, *Sochineniia*, pp. 577–8.

[69] A Soviet biographer of Griboedov, S.V. Shostakovich, quotes from Griboedov's letter to his wife, dated 5 January 1829, from Qazvīn: "The prisoners here have driven me out of my mind." Shostakovich omits the next sentence: "Some will not be delivered, while others themselves do not want to return." Shostakovich, p. 213, cf. Griboedov, *Sochineniia*, p. 581.

[70] Shostakovich, p. 230.

waging war on Turkey, took a conciliatory attitude. Moreover, Saint Petersburg knew that Griboedov "in all probability to some extent provoked the terrible catastrophe . . . In any event, I share entirely your opinion that the Persian government had nothing to do with it", Nesselrode wrote to Paskevich.[71] A special mission led by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's fifth son, Khusrau Mīrzā, travelled to Saint Petersburg to apologize to the Tsar. On 24 August 1829 in a solemn audience the Tsar expressed his willingness to forgive.

Once the Treaty of Turkmānchai had freed Iran of her preoccupation with Transcaucasia, the Shah could turn to other parts of the Empire where insurgent khans were still in control. ʿAbbās Mīrzā, now of necessity a friend of the Russians, proceeded to Khurāsān, where according to the Imperial Farmān, he was to eliminate rebels and enemies. He took Amīrābād, Turshīz, Qūchān, Turbat, Sarakhs, and prepared to attack Herat. Russia was happy to see Iran find compensation in the east for territories lost in the north and encouraged ʿAbbās Mīrzā to dream of the conquest of Herat, Qandahar, and Kabul, promising him every kind of help.[72]

The Russian minister in Tehran, Count Ivan Simonich, was a Dalmatian who had served in Napoleon's army; he was captured by the Russians and stayed to serve them first as a soldier and later as a diplomat. In spite of the change of allegiance, Simonich remained an ardent Bonapartist and a hater of Britain. His energetic activity in Tehran alarmed the British who began to feel that the Persian government's interest in Afghanistan was part of a sinister plot.

> The open rapprochement between Persia and Russia became a fact that would not let the London cabinet sleep at night. The most ordinary steps appeared to it as craftiness directed to that which it feared most – the conquest of India.[73]

When ʿAbbās Mīrzā died in 1833, his son, Muḥammad Mīrzā, was proclaimed heir, ascending the throne in 1834 as Muḥammad Shāh. Russian influence increased further as Muḥammad Shāh pushed forward his late father's designs on Herat. Count Simonich enthusiastically promoted a plan for an alliance of Tehran, Qandahar, and Kabul under Russia's patronage. A certain Ian Viktorovich Vitkovich (Jan Witkowicz?) appeared on the scene to cement the alliance. British public opinion was aroused and Russia dropped the scheme, though Simonich had "in the name of the Russian Empire guaranteed the Tehran-Kabul-Qandahar entente".[74] In the end Britain had to threaten war to prevent Muḥammad Shāh from capturing Herat and re-establishing Iran's

[71] *Ibid.*, 263. [72] Tājbakhsh, pp. 120–5.
[73] I.O. Simonich, *Vospominaniia*, p. 37. [74] N.A. Khalfin in a preface to Simonich, p. 15.

dominance over Afghanistan. Russia, though willing to promote Iran's eastward expansion, was not prepared to risk an all out confrontation with Britain in Asia.

The next two decades of Russo-Persian relations were fairly tranquil. Even the Crimean War did not have much effect. For a moment Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh toyed with the idea of joining Russia against Turkey, and receiving from a grateful Tsar a few slices of Turkish territory. However, Mīrzā Āghā Khān Nūrī dissuaded the Shah from such a course. Next Nāṣir al-Dīn tried to enter an alliance with the British against Russia but received no encouragement from London.[75]

Defeat in the Crimea propelled Russia into Central Asia. Directed by General Dmitri Alekseevich Miliutin, Russian armies in a number of effective campaigns destroyed the forces of Khiva, Bukhārā, and Qūqand (Kokand) and, in one generation, built a great empire in the heart of the continent. In her drive south Russia crossed an imaginary line somewhere to the north of the Türkmen village of Qizil-Sū that Persia considered to be her frontier. To Persian protests about this new intrusion Russia replied that the Iranian border ran along the Atrak river and that Iran had never exercised any authority over the Türkmens. The Russian minister in Tehran, A.F. Beger, formally notified the Persian government on 25 December 1869 "that the Imperial Government recognizes Persian dominion up to the Atrak".[76] The issue was closed.

Russian advances in Central Asia kept the British in a state of perpetual discomfort punctuated by occasional panics. Against its will Iran was drawn into the great imperial game. However, her forces had diminished to such an extent, her position had sunk so low in relation to the great powers that she no longer had a policy beyond her frontiers. All that her diplomats could do was to keep a precarious balance amidst the tensions produced by Anglo-Russian rivalry. No British promises of support could induce the impotent Persian government to take a strong stand against the Russians as they moved eastward through the Ākhāl oasis toward Sarakhs and Marv. When the Russian advance finally halted, it was only because British power barred the way.

Within Iran Anglo-Russian rivalry took the form of struggles over economic concessions, each side trying to gain an advantage over the other. The stupendous concession granted in 1872 to Baron Julius de Reuter, an English subject, evoked a violent reaction in Saint Petersburg, leading to the cancellation of the Reuter concession and to the acquisition of a concession by Baron von

[75] Tājbakhsh, pp. 140–4. [76] A. Il'iasov, pp. 31–2.

Falkenhagen, a Russian subject. The Falkenhagen concession, like the Reuter concession, was eventually cancelled. Thus great-power jealousies kept Iran alive and simultaneously prevented all commercial and industrial development. Reuter, Falkenhagen, some enterprising Frenchmen, groups of Russian businessmen, all tried at one time or another to build railways, dams, or factories. All invariably failed. Businesses that succeeded, such as the Imperial Bank of Persia or the Loan and Discount Bank of Persia, were enterprises either directly sponsored or strongly supported by the British and the Russian governments respectively for political reasons.[77]

Some of the concessions were incredibly costly to Iran. A Major Gerald Talbot was granted a monopoly to buy, sell and manufacture tobacco throughout Iran. Iranian merchants and the ʿulamā organized a movement against this foreign monopoly and received strong Russian support. The movement soon assumed an anti-Shah character and was, indeed, the precursor of the Constitutional Movement of 1906. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh attempted to resist but the opposition was too great. The Talbot concession was cancelled, leaving Iran with a debt of £500,000. Since there was no money with which to pay it, the Persian government had to increase its borrowing. When they had exhausted their credit with the British, the Russians provided loans.

In 1898 Russian activity in Iran increased sharply. Russian businessmen negotiated for mining concessions in Qarājadāgh. The Russian government obtained a concession to build a lighthouse at Anzalī. Inspired by S. Iu. Witte, the energetic minister of finance, the Russian government began a large-scale political and economic offensive that gradually gave Russia almost complete control of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's successor, Muẓaffar al-Dīn. The British fought back, scoring occasional successes. They supported an oil concession obtained in southern Persia by their subject, William Knox D'Arcy. They also prevented Witte from building a Russian pipeline from the Caspian to the Persian Gulf. Nevertheless, in the century-old struggle Britain was rapidly losing ground.

To reverse this trend and recover her position Britain needed allies. Her treaty with Japan (1902) provided a distant but powerful instrument against Russia. In February 1904 Japan struck. After much heavy fighting on land and a naval disaster Russia lost the war in the far East but not her determination to maintain her position in Iran. Even a domestic revolution and financial insolvency could not prevent the government of Nicholas II from granting more loans to his client, Muẓaffar al-Din Shah; opening consulates in two towns on the Persian Gulf; promoting the purchase of land by Russian citizens in

[77] See also below, Chapter 11, pp. 406ff.

Khurāsān and Gīlān; advancing £100,000 to Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, heir to the throne, and engaging in other such activities.[78]

In 1906 a revolution broke out in Tehran. The movement had for its goal the establishment of a constitutional government, but in essence it was directed against Russia. The weak Shah capitulated, signed a constitution (7 January 1907) and died a week later. His successor, Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāh, was a Russian puppet and a determined upholder of autocracy. Only the Persian Cossack Brigade, a force officered by the Russians, kept him on the throne.

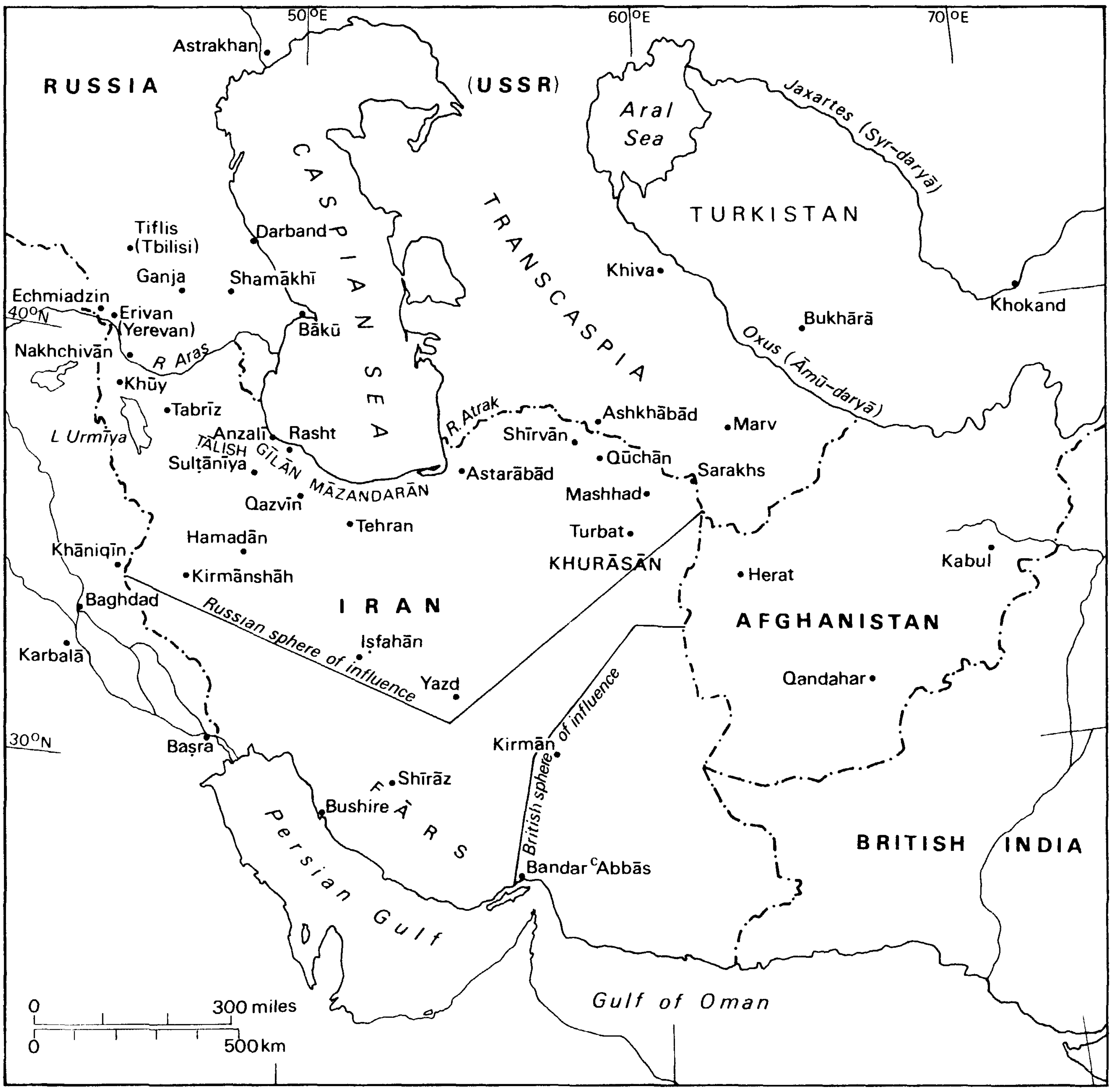
European politics, Britain's fear of the growing power of Germany, and Russia's need to recover from war and revolution brought the rival powers to an agreement that marked the end of Persian independence. The Iranian government had not even been informed of the negotiations that produced a treaty which divided Iran into spheres of influence, while it paid lip service to her territorial integrity. During the subsequent ten years Russia acted as if Iran were another conquered province. Russian troops occupied Khurāsān, Āẕarbāījān, and Gīlān. Russian consulates became governing bodies and the consuls sometimes collected local taxes. The Constitutional Movement was severely limited, if not destroyed, when Morgan Shuster, an American financial advisor, was forced to leave Iran by Russian diplomatic and military pressure (27 December 1911).

The outbreak of World War I temporarily strengthened the hold of Russia and Britain on Persia. In March 1915 in return for British acquiescence in the Russian annexation of Constantinople, the Tsar agreed that Britain should take over the so called neutral zone in central Iran. However, this potentially significant development proved ephemeral. Under the blows of the German army the Tsarist régime collapsed. The Provisional Government that succeeded Nicholas II tried its best to continue his foreign policies, but it too fell, giving way to the Soviet régime led by V.I. Lenin.

Three weeks after assuming power, the Soviet government published an appeal to the Muslims of Russia and the East. Couched in highly inflammatory language, it addressed those whose faith and customs had been trampled upon, whose mosques and houses of worship were destroyed by the Tsars and Russian oppressors. The appeal stated among other things that the treaty partitioning Persia was null and void, that troops would be withdrawn from Iran and the Persians would be accorded the right "freely to determine their fate".[79] In January and February 1918 diplomatic contacts were made between Soviet

[78] F. Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia, 1864–1914: A Study in Imperialism*, p. 470.

[79] Ministerstvo inostrannykh del S.S.S.R., *Dokumenty vneshnei politiki S.S.S.R.* (Moscow, 1957–), vol. 1, No. 18, p. 34. Hereafter cited as *D.V.P.*



Map 8. Russian and British spheres of influence

Russia and Iran both in Petrograd and in Tehran, though the Persians found it difficult to take seriously the Soviet representative, Kolomiitsev, a twenty-two year old youth from Bākū, capital of the newly born republic of Āẕarbāījān, with credentials signed by Stepan Shaumian, a member of the Bākū Soviet, an organization without legal standing.

In June 1919, L.M. Karakhan, assistant commissar of foreign affairs wrote to the Persian government that Soviet Russia cancelled debts owed to Russia by Persia, annulled all concessions, was turning over to Persia all Russian assets on Persian territory, and was prepared to work out with Persia a number of other problems.[80] The Persian government was in no position to take immediate

[80] *D.V.P.* II, No. 129, pp. 198–200.

advantage of the opportunity, for in the summer of 1919 the British, moving into the power vacuum left by the collapse of Russia, attempted to impose upon Persia a virtual protectorate by means of a proposed Anglo-Persian Treaty.[81] Gaining the cooperation of a few high officials, whom they bribed with large sums of money, the British brought token forces to the north, provoking the population of Gīlān into guerrilla action known as the *Jangalī* movement.[82] In an address to the workers and peasants of Persia, Foreign Commissar Chicherin proclaimed:

At the moment when the triumphant victor, the English beast of prey, is trying to put a noose of final enslavement around the neck of the Persian people, the Soviet government of the workers and peasants of the Russian Republic solemnly declares that it does not recognize the Anglo-Persian treaty bringing about this enslavement . . . The Soviet government of Russia regards as a piece of paper to which it will never accord legal force, the shameful Anglo-Persian treaty through which your rulers have sold themselves and have sold you to the English predator.[83]

The civil war that raged in Russia in 1919–20 made further contacts between the Soviets and Iran difficult if not impossible. However, in the spring of 1920 the Soviet 11th Army put an end to the brief existence of the independent republic of (Russian) Āẕarbāījān and occupied Bākū. On 18 May Soviet troops landed at Anzalī. Though the original motive of the invasion was the recovery of some ships taken to Anzalī by retreating Russian counter-revolutionary forces, once the Soviet army was there, it would not withdraw in spite of pleas from the commissariat of foreign affairs, which was anxious to normalize relations not only with Iran but with Britain as well.[84]

The presence of Soviet troops in Gīlān encouraged the Jangalī movement to extend its activities and become a serious threat. In Tehran the government began to fear an attack on the capital. Fīrūz Mīrzā Nuṣrat al-Daula, minister of foreign affairs, asked Lord Derby, the British Ambassador in Paris, what course of action to pursue. The British had nothing to contribute. They had debated the Persian issue within the highest government circles and come to the conclusion that there was no force they could spare to repel a Bolshevik occupation of northern Iran. The Persians had no choice but to deal directly with Soviet Russia.

Again, as often in the past, necessity dictated policy. Fīrūz Mīrzā entered into negotiations with Chicherin. In a note dispatched on 12 June 1920, he stated that to win the confidence of the Iranian people and government, Russia must

[81] For further details see Chapter 5, p. 209. [82] See also chapters 5, p. 208 and 6, p. 218.
[83] *D.V.P.* II, No. 155, pp. 238–42. [84] Kheifets, p. 273. *D.V.P.* vol. II, No. 373, p. 559.

withdraw her troops from Iran, promise never to commit any aggression against Persian territory, abstain from conducting propaganda among and giving support "to the elements of disorder in Persia", and make restitutions for the property taken by troops or representatives of the Soviet government.[85] On 20 June 1920, Chicherin replied that this and other messages that Fīrūz Mīrzā had sent him were full of erroneous information, and that there were no Soviet troops anywhere in Iran.

> The guilt for the movement of the Persian population against the central Government cannot be imparted to us. In general [and here Chicherin instinctively assumed a tone reminiscent of a Tsitsianov or Ermolov] all statements you make against our Government are based on erroneous data that absolutely do not correspond to reality.[86]

The Persians repeatedly asked the British for diplomatic, military, and financial support in dealing with the Soviets. None was given. Lord Curzon could not persuade the War Office to spare one or two divisions for Iran; yet, blinded by obsolete notions, he pushed with what appeared an insane insistence for the ratification of the Anglo-Persian treaty of 1919. By late summer 1920 that treaty was, of course, a dead issue, whereas the Russian troops in Gīlān, Chicherin to the contrary notwithstanding, were very much alive. In July and August British troops evacuated Manjīl. There was no longer a doubt that Tehran itself would soon be open to any force that chose to move in from the north.

The Persian government offered Moscow recognition and the establishment of diplomatic relations. ʿAlī Qulī Khān Anṣārī, Mushāvir al-Mamālik, then ambassador in Constantinople, was sent to Russia where he had served before the Revolution. The negotiations between Mushāvir al-Mamālik and Chicherin took many months. The Iranian side pressed for the evacuation of Soviet troops from Gīlān, troops that Chicherin first claimed were not there and which later were labelled Āẕarbāījānī detachments, thus presumably freeing Russia of responsibility for their movements or actions.

The Soviet government was facing a difficult choice. Persian radicals, joined by a number of Bākū Bolsheviks, had taken over Kūchik Khān's xenophobic movement in Gīlān. Under the leadership of the idealistic extremist, Iḥsān-Allāh Khān, they proclaimed a Soviet republic of Gīlān which was instantly endorsed by Trotsky. The new régime proceeded to conduct reforms that had no basis in economic and social conditions of the area. It also launched an offensive across the mountains in the direction of Tehran. The offensive failed, but its threat

[85] *D.V.P.* II, No. 291, pp. 580–1. [86] *D.V.P.* II, No. 391, p. 580.

stiffened the British position in the quiet negotiations that were being conducted by the Soviet government with their chief enemy. Lenin realized that the Soviet régime was nearing economic collapse and desperately needed trade with the West. The British would not trade unless the Soviets gave up revolutionary activity in Asia and, first of all, withdrew from Iran. Thus the British and the Iranian positions coincided and Lenin had to choose between continued support of the Soviet Republic of Gīlān and normalization of relations with Britain and Persia. He chose the latter.

On 26 February 1921, in Moscow G.V. Chicherin and Mushāvir al-Mamālik signed a treaty of twenty-six articles. The Soviet government, Article 2 stated, "unequivocally rejects this criminal policy [of Tsarist Russia], which not only violated the sovereignty of the states of Asia, but also led to organized profound violence of European predators against the living body of the peoples of the East". The treaty reaffirmed the permanence of Russo-Iranian frontiers, renounced interference in one another's domestic affairs, and pledged not to permit the formation of groups on the territory of one state that would engage in activity directed against the other, nor to permit the presence on their territories of armed forces of some third state. Tsarist loans to Persia were cancelled and Russia gave up all railways, highways, port facilities at Anzalī, and barges on lake Urmīya. Article 11 explicitly cancelled the Treaty of Turkmānchai. Persia on her part promised not to transfer to a third power or its citizens any of the concessions formerly held by Russia. The régime of capitulations was abolished.

This treaty, so favourable to Iran, contained one sinister clause, Article 6 which stated that:

> [. . .] if there should occur attempts on the part of third powers to conduct via armed intervention on the territory of Persia a policy of conquest, or to turn Persian territory into a base for armed action against Russia, if there arise therefore a danger to the borders of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic or powers allied with it, and if the Persian government, after being warned by the Russian Soviet Government, should be powerless to turn aside such a danger, the Russian Soviet Government will have the right to introduce its troops on to the territory of Persia in order to take the necessary measures in the interest of self-defence.[87]

In spite of an exchange of letters which specified that Article 6 referred to Russian White groups, a number of which were still operating on the fringes of the Soviet territory, the Russian government in later years chose to interpret it as a right to unlimited military intervention. The article was so used in 1941.

Five days before the conclusion of the treaty, the Qazvīn and Hamadān

[87] *D.V.P.* III, No. 305, pp. 538–9.

detachments of the Persian Cossack Brigade, the only effective force that had survived years of turmoil and anarchy in Iran, marched on Tehran at the orders of their commander, Colonel Riżā Khān. A *coup d'état* installed a new cabinet in which Riżā Khān as minister of war had a dominant position. The new government did not repudiate the treaty of 26 February. However, it succeeded in hastening the departure of British troops from southern Persia, thus depriving the Soviets of a pretext for staying in Gīlān.

Soviet leadership was divided on the Gīlān issue. In Bākū firebrands demanded a further extension of revolutionary struggle. G.K. Orjonikidze went so far as to disobey Moscow's orders for withdrawal of Soviet troops from Anzalī. Lenin sided with Chicherin and F.A. Rothstein, the newly appointed ambassador to Tehran, both of whom had nothing but contempt for Kūchik Khān and his movement, which was rent by murderous dissensions. Since Persia procrastinated and postponed ratification on one pretext or another in the expectation of the Russian evacuation of Gīlān, Moscow at last compelled Bākū to carry out its orders.

The Persian consul in Bākū, Muḥammad Khān Sāʿid al-Vizāra, acknowledged to the Soviet authorities of Āẕarbāījān that with the exception of some 150 persons who were apparently awaiting transport, Soviet troops had evacuated Persia, and added that the legitimate Persian authorities would immediately enter areas evacuated by the Soviets "in complete certainty that not one soldier of Soviet republics friendly to Persia would stand in the way of the advance of government garrisons . . ."[88] Sāʿid's apprehensions were groundless. The last Soviet troops left the country before the end of the year, and for the first time in more than a decade no foreign soldiers stood on Iran's soil.

In the decades that followed, the course of Russo-Iranian relations was never smooth. Iran was subject to unrelenting pressure in all its dealings with its northern neighbour. Minor border disputes frequently assumed the proportions of major issues. Economic relations were often difficult and painful as the Iranian government tried to protect the interests of hundreds of small traders who found themselves at the mercy of a huge government monopoly. The Soviet spy and subversion apparatus under a variety of initials (G.P.U., N.K.V.D., etc.) ran a large and active network in Iran. Persian Communists found a refuge and a base of operations in the Soviet Union.

However, Russia was no longer occupying the same position *vis-à-vis* Iran as she did before 1917. Within Iran itself there emerged a centralized government,

[88] A.S. Tisminets (ed.), *Vneshniaia politika S.S.S.R.* II (Moscow?, 1944), p. 147.

a national army, and a national spirit which made old style imperialism less effective. The world balance of power, and the insecurity felt by the Soviet Union itself, made it follow a cautious policy that excluded risk-taking and adventure. Anglo-Soviet hostility made impossible, at least until 1941, another division of Iran into spheres of influence. Conversely, the same hostility provided Iran with insurance against excessive pressure from Great Britain. The policy of balancing the two great powers that had broken down after 1905 was effective once more and would serve Iran well until the collapse of British power in the aftermath of World War II.

CHAPTER 10

IRANIAN RELATIONS WITH THE EUROPEAN TRADING COMPANIES, TO 1798

"A barbarous nation, called Afghans . . . rushed like a torrent into Persia, and took Ispahan, after a violent siege." This was the way in which Sir William Jones described the ascendancy which the Ghilzai Afghan leader, Maḥmūd Shāh, achieved in Iran in 1722.[1] The Afghan occupation lasted for eight years and precipitated the end of Safavid rule. Not until the establishment of the Qājārs by Āghā Muḥammad Khān in 1794 did Iran know another period of relative overall stability.[2]

In 1722 the East India Company represented the principal British interest in Iran. The Company had begun trading in the Persian Gulf in 1616 when the *James* was sent from Surat to Jask with seven factors bound for Iran. By the summer of 1617 they had taken up residence in Shīrāz and the Safavid capital, Iṣfahān. The expulsion of the Portuguese in 1622 from Hurmuz left Bandar ʿAbbās (Gombroon) the former's replacement as the Gulf's major trading port while, from 1623 till 1765, the Dutch East India Company became Britain's chief commercial rival in Iran.[3] In the late 17th and early 18th centuries British trade prospered. British factors reached the western coast of the Caspian "where they

[1] Jones, *Works* XII, pp. 435–6. For a description of the siege and final reduction of Iṣfahān see Lockhart, *The Fall of the Ṣafavī Dynasty, passim; idem, Nadir Shah*, pp. 8–9 and Krusinski, *History of the Revolution in Persia* (London, 1728), II, pp. 200–1, 262ff. For a later description of Iṣfahān see William Price, *Journal of the British Embassy to Persia* (London, 1825), p. 20; Hamilton, *A New Account* I, pp. 89–144.

[2] There are several guides to this period: first Lorimer, *Gazetteer*; a more recent study by Abdul Amir Amin, *British Interests in the Persian Gulf*, contains helpful materials for the first three quarters of the 18th century. Laurence Lockhart's *The Fall of the Ṣafavī Dynasty and the Afghan Occupation of Persia* and his *Nadir Shah*, are useful for the years up to 1747. For Karim Khan see Perry, *Karim Khan Zand*; Wilson, *The Persian Gulf* still has value. Indispensable for the 18th century are the archives of the East India Company in the India Office Records and Library and in particular, the series G/29/1–32 and its successor L/P&S/9. Note that the series G/29/1–32 in the India Office Library has now been renumbered. The volume entitled *India Office Records. G. Factory Records*, pp. 83–4, continued on p. 93, contains the key for the new volume numbers. For the later part of the 18th century the papers of Sir Harford Jones Brydges in the Kentchurch Court MSS in National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, are a rich source of little used material.

[3] John Bruce, *Annals of the Honorable East-India Company*, contains numerous references to the early development of the East India Company trade. See, for example, I, pp. 173, 183; III, pp. 241–3. See also William Foster (ed.), *Letters Received by the East India Company* I, p. 307; II, pp. xx, 98–9, 169;

sold great quantities of the woollen manufactures of Great Britain", and British and Dutch traders in Iṣfahān braved the Afghan invasion in 1722.[4] The French, with consular representation there, made better terms than their rivals, although the terms involved religious orders more than trade.[5] The French East India Company was established by Colbert in 1664, but, to a greater extent than the Dutch or British companies, it was seen, in the context of India, as a means of French national expansion and rivalry with Britain. Thus the decline from 1761 of the French political position in India hastened the Company's abolition in 1769. The French company had also been adversely affected by John Law's schemes, and by its neglect of the country trade.

Initially, Maḥmūd Shāh the Afghan's overtures to foreigners resident in Iṣfahān seemed promising, but he later seized the British and Dutch companies' assets. Meanwhile, trading prospects worsened with invasions by the Ottoman Turks and the Russians, and revolts within Iran. In the north a Safavid prince had, with support of some chieftains of the Qājār tribe, established himself as Ṭahmāsp II. In 1727 he was joined by Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān (later Nādir Shāh), who rapidly extended his own authority over much of the country. Two years later the Afghans were crushed. In 1732 Ṭahmāsp II was deposed in favour of another Safavid, the infant, ʿAbbās III, but with the coronation of Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān as Nādir Shāh in 1736 pretence of Safavid rule was abandoned.

Nādir Shāh first encountered European merchants in 1729 when he wrested Iṣfahān from the Afghans. During his six-week stay in the capital he seemed well disposed towards the foreigners but hopes soon faded. Indeed, the spread of violence and disorder in all directions led the Bombay authorities to believe that the British factory at Iṣfahān should be closed, and as a result of increasingly unfavourable trading conditions and the growing prominence of Mashhad, the Iṣfahān establishment was left in the hands of the "linguist" (interpreter),

III, pp. 177–8, 194; IV, pp. 195, 220–1; V, p. 100; VI, pp. 293–7. *The English Factories in India, 1618–1669: A Calendar of Documents in the India Office, British Museum and Public Record Office*, 13 vols. (Oxford, 1906–27), II, pp. vii–viii, xi–xii, 117–18, 131–2, 151. Factories were not places where things were manufactured, but rather depots for goods imported and exported. Factors managed the factory and are what would later be called agents.

[4] Hanway, *An Historical Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea* I, pp. 296–7. For the origins and development of British, Dutch, and French interests in Persia see Lockhart, *Fall*, chs. 29–37. The company had since 1697 maintained its main establishment at Iṣfahān, that at Gombroon being subordinate to it. As inland troubles increased Iṣfahān declined in importance and Gombroon became known as "the Agency" to which other factories were subordinated. See J.A. Saldanha, *Selections from State Papers*, IOR, L/P&S/20. See also Lorimer, *Gazetteer* I, Historical, pt. 2, pp. 2673–4, 85–6.

[5] Lockhart, *Fall*, pp. 463–72, 533–4. The French consuls were Ange and François Gardane. The former was the grandfather of General Claude M. Gardane.

although in 1742 the activities of a British venture in northern Iran, in competition with the East India Company, briefly revitalized the Iṣfahān agency.[6]

It had occurred to Captain John Elton, an Englishman employed by the Russian government on the Orenburg frontier, that trade between Britain and Iran might be routed through Russia. The Russia (or Muscovy) Company had already been established by charter from Queen Mary in 1555, though not until 1734 had a treaty of commerce been concluded between Russia and Britain. Thus the mechanisms for trade already existed. In 1739 Elton travelled to Iran where he was impressed with the trading prospects. He wrote about them so persuasively that an Act of Parliament providing for the Caspian commerce was passed in 1741, enabling the Russia Company to take up the venture. Its British representatives were soon in Iran, where a factory was set up at Mashhad. This enterprise, for a time, caused consternation both to the East India and the Levant Company.[7]

Elton not only engaged in this trade. He also agreed to "build ships after the European manner, with a view to navigate the Caspian Sea" on behalf of Nādir Shāh. In April 1744, the Shah's health was drunk on completion of the stem and stern of the first ship – "intended to mount twenty cannons, which is of greater force than the Russians ever navigated on the Caspian". The building of this ship, and the prospect of more to follow, aroused Russian hostility. By a decree of 1746 Empress Elizabeth forbade the Caspian trade through Russia in British cloth and manufactured goods, sent in exchange for raw silk. In 1751 Elton, the last remaining British merchant in northern Iran, was killed in Gīlān in the chaos following Nādir Shāh's death in 1747. The British factors in Iṣfahān did not escape the general deterioration of conditions, and were so badly handled that one died. The factory was closed in 1750.[8]

Nor, with factories at Bandar ʿAbbās, Baṣra, Shīrāz, and Lār, were the Dutch exempt from worry; but the French, whose effort in 1740 to resume a position trading in the Gulf region failed, were no longer involved on land. Dutch and British prospects were damaged between 1737 and 1744 by Nādir Shāh's Omani expeditions, the crippling taxation and requisition of shipping which these entailed adversely affecting trade. The principal legacy of Nādir's campaigns

[6] "The Afghan Conquest of Persia. Unpublished Contemporary Correspondence", *The Asiatic Quarterly Review* (July, 1886), II, pp. 156–210. See also correspondence in India Office Records, G/29/4, G/29/15, and L/P&S/20. The Public Department Diary, no. 17, 8 March 1744, contains the phrase "settle a factory of Maushat".

[7] Hanway, I, pp. 9, 30, 42–5, 149, 301–12. Lockhart summarizes the arguments for the Caspian trade in *Nadir Shah*, p. 287. See also Cook, *Voyages and Travels* II, pp. 507ff.

[8] Hanway, I, pp. 301–12, 329, 331, 337–8, 353, 364–5. For the value and extent of this trade see pp. 350–1. Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, pp. 282–90. Cook, *loc. cit.*

against Oman was the future rise of the family of Bū Saʿīd as rulers of Oman and Zanzibar.

Construction was one of the ways in which ships for Nādir's naval enterprise in the south, parallel to that on the Caspian, were furnished. His Admiral of the Gulf, Laṭīf Khān, appointed in 1734, was empowered by this sovereign to obtain vessels from the British and Dutch at Gombroon and did so from this post, also from Surat, both by purchase and by requisition. Conditions were sufficiently adverse for traders acting for the British representatives to note that shipping was a sure way to gain Nādir Shāh's goodwill and therefore not to be neglected while he was busy building up his "Naval Affairs" to a pitch which, though the attempt collapsed with his assassination in 1747, ensured Nādir's place in history as one who attempted to project Iran as a maritime power.[9]

In Nādir Shāh's later years the trading outlook became so discouraging that the East India Company considered quitting the area altogether. Nādir Shāh's excesses after he had blinded his oldest son in 1742 reduced the country to confusion and desperation. A report from Baṣra stated that the "variety of Troubles that have lately happened in these parts has occasioned an entire Stop to Trade".[10] The following year conditions and had worsened: "there is a great appearance of everything going to confusion in the Kingdom of Persia".[11] Nādir Shāh had so "long and grievously oppressed" those he ruled that Thomas Grendon (the Resident at Baṣra) conveyed the opinion that the "Generality of Mankind in these Parts are inclined to believe he cannot hold out long".[12] He was assassinated in June 1747 and political disintegration swiftly followed.

In the north, the Qājār khans controlled much of Gurgān, Māzandarān and, eventually, Gīlān. As affairs settled down, the province of Khurāsān was virtually separated from the rest of the country and passed under Afghan domination, with the rise of the powerful Durrānī monarchy under Aḥmad Shāh. Already master of Sīstān and Qandahar, Aḥmad Shāh conquered Herat and followed this by the successful siege of Mashhad in 1751. To him Nādir Shāh's blinded grandson, Shāh Rukh, owed such authority as he exercised for many years in and around Mashhad.

In the south another Safavid descendant, Ismāʿīl III, was installed in 1750 by the combined support of the chiefs of the Bakhtiyārī and Zand tribes, but he was never more than a puppet. After long exertions Karīm Khān Zand gained

[9] Hanway, I, p. 192; Lockhart, *Nadir Shah*, pp. 78, 213–4, 220–9, 285–6. See also his article "Nādir Shāh's Campaigns in ʿOmān", and W. Floor, "The Iranian Navy in the Gulf during the Eighteenth century", pp. 31–53. See also Public Department Diary, no. 9 of 1735/6, Bombay Castle, April 1736 and Saldanha, *Selections*. [10] Basra, 21 August 1744. IOR, G/29/15.

[11] Basra, 5 December 1745. IOR, G/29/15. [12] Basra, 6 January 1746/7. IOR, G/29/15.

control and consolidated his position as a paramount ruler centred upon Shīrāz, to survive until 1779. Malcolm was to write of "the happy reign of this excellent Prince",[13] but British observers frequently commented on his onerous tax exactions, especially in the years when he was struggling to establish himself. In 1761 they reported:

> Carem Caun had ordered twenty thousand Tomaunds to be taken from Carmenia to pay the Military, five thousand for himself, and five thousand for his Choppars: That when the distribution came to be made, it was found to be seven times more than the usual Tax; That the Kingdom seemed to go very fast unto Ruin the Great Men paying no regard to the Subject, but only to the gratifying their Soldiers and Dependents.[14]

Francklin observed that Karīm Khān "encouraged and protected trade with his utmost favour".[15] He did this not only to revive the country but also to enlist European co-operation in the Gulf, yet the European trading powers did not thereafter begin to enjoy a new era of harmonious prosperity. In 1752 Francis Wood described Karīm Khān as "little better than Governour of Spahaun, as the Country remains in the same distracted Condition now as, it has done for many Years past, every City with the Adjacent Villages, being as it were a distinct Principality at Variance with the next".[16] Such were the widespread civil disturbances and the multiplicity of his rivals that Karīm Khān did not extend his control to the Gulf coast until the 1760s. By the time he did, Iran was facing a serious specie drain which necessitated restrictive measures. Both the British and the Dutch became preoccupied with the more pressing matters of global rivalry with the French, the Seven Years War (1756–63), and the acute financial troubles of the trading companies themselves.

After 1747 the Dutch displayed great energy in the Gulf, especially when they established themselves on Khārg island in 1753 under the direction of Baron Kniphausen. These impressive activities, although alarming to the British, brought the Dutch no lasting benefit nor much immediate commercial success. When they were driven from Khārg in 1765 by Mīr Muhannā Zaʿabī, shaikh of Bandar Rīg, forty miles north of Bushire along the coast, their whole position in the Gulf collapsed and was not revived. Meanwhile, by 1763 the East India Company emerged with effective control over Bengal and the foundations for the British territorial empire in India had been laid.

[13] Malcolm, *History* II, pp. 115, 147. See also Brydges, *Dynasty*, pp. cv–cviii. Francklin, pp. 300–310.

[14] Public Department Diary, no. 36 of 1761, Bombay Castle, 25 April 1761. Saldanha, *Selections*.

[15] Francklin, p. 307.

[16] Wood to Bombay Council, Gombroon, 17 September 1752. Saldanha, *Selections*. See also Kristof Glamann, *Dutch–Asiatic Trade 1620–1740*.

While confusion prevailed in Iran during the middle decades of the 18th century, the British in India had been fully occupied with the French. In the Persian Gulf region the instability was such that the agent at Bandar ʿAbbās recommended moving to one of the islands. In the late summer of 1750 Danvers Graves summarized the bleak outlook in Persia in a letter to Bombay which pictured the chaos following Nādir Shāh's death and before Karīm Khān gained a measure of ascendancy.

This Kingdom is so far from being settled under any regular Government that it is now almost fallen beyond hopes of Recovery. Spahaun and the adjacent Villages are in the Hands of the Lhores under Careem Caun, the Province of Ghuloon has submitted to a wild Tribe of People called Cajarrs. Muscat, to the Chords, the Chorasson Countries are divided between the Chords, Ophgoons, and Persians, the Chorasson Governours of Yezd and Carmenia have set up separately for themselves, Shyrash remains in Possession of the Lhores who plundered Spahaun, and the Countries extending from the City of Shyrash to Lhor, while Nasser Caun remained there with his Forces were under Subjection to him, but since his arrival here most of the Villages & People have revolted, so that the whole is divided as it were into different Principalities independent of one another, without the least Prospect of their ever being united.[17]

The agent at Gombroon was attracted to Baḥrain, where the fort was reputed to be in good repair, but availability of good water was a problem. So were the Huwala Arabs. He had also suggested that what remained of the Iranian navy (four ships in the vicinity) be seized. These suggestions found no favour at Bombay, but settlement on one of the islands was authorized "till the Troubles in the Kingdom of Persia are subsided".[18] A new agent carried out surveys in 1752, and suggested that Qishm island suited the Company's needs. The project was dropped when Henry Savage, who had proposed transferring to Baḥrain, died in 1751, and his successor, Danvers Graves, who preferred Qishm, died in September 1752.[19] Death was indeed "familiar in those parts caused by ill aire staying so long in it in Gombroon".[20] Francis Wood as agent then conducted his

[17] For an idea of the extreme fragmentation and insecurity inland, see, among others, letters from Danvers Graves, Yezd, 27 July and 25 August 1750; Consultations, Gombroon, 1 and 15 December 1750; Henry Savage, Gombroon, 18 December 1750; Henry Savage, Danvers Graves and Francis Wood, Letter to Court of Directors, Gombroon, 18 January 1750/1, IOR, G/29/6.

[18] Consultation, 26 February 1751. Saldanha, *Selections*. See also letter from the Council and Governor, Bombay Castle, 8 December 1750, IOR, G/29/6.

[19] Danvers Graves to Bombay Council, Gombroon, 24 February 1751–2, IOR, G/29/6; this letter puts the case for moving to a nearby island "Angar or Kishmess". A further report, 4 April 1752, gives preference to Qishm subsequent to an eleven-day visit there.

[20] "Commission and instructions given us by the President & Councell of India, Persia, etc. unto our loving friends, Mr Richard Cradock proceeding as Agent in the negotiating of the Hon. Comp. Affaires in Persia & are to be observed by him there", 3 March 1661/2. Saldanha, *Selections*. See also Lorimer, IA (Historical), pp. 123–4.

own investigations. He concluded that no advantage would be gained by moving to an island. It would forfeit the friendship of the Iranians, might lead to war with them, and it was upon their goodwill that "the sale of our Woollen Goods entirely depends".[21]

Despite persistent "shocks and convulsions" the East India Company traders somehow carried on in Iran during the Afghan occupation, throughout the oppressions of Nādir Shāh, and during the disorders following his death. In fact, in the 1750s a lively and substantial trade was carried on in spite of the breakdown of the authority of the central government and increased instability in the Gulf caused by Arab pirates and tribal rivalries.[22] Silk, once a key item in East India Company trade with Iran, had for a number of reasons – restrictive legislation by Britain, the availability of supplies elsewhere, and vicissitudes within Persia – lost its pre-eminence. A consistently sought-after commodity, however, was "Carmanian wool", used for making hats and shawls in Britain. This wool, from Kirmān province, came from goats and was available in different colours – black, white, and red. The red had long been highly prized. Instructions written as early as 1684 required double the quantity of former years to be sent of this "most stable Commodity".[23]

Arrangements for obtaining Kirmān wool form an appreciable part of the Company's Gombroon diary. In February 1727 an entry dealing largely with Dutch rivalry in Kirmān recorded the view that cash "can be returned to Bombay no ways so advantageously as in Wooll".[24] In April an entry stated that one of the objectives at the Gombroon factory was "to give as much life as possible to the Investment of Wool at Carmania".[25] In May it was noted that while goats had been plentiful, "the Ophgoons had been there and drove many of them away which with Entirely plundering those parts, had made wool very scarce".[26] Still, a substantial sum went to purchase wool, despite its extravagant price. Though of primary significance, Kirmān wool was only one item of trade. An entry for July recorded the arrival from Shīrāz of 280 chests of wine and 100 chests of rosewater.[27] Old copper was also in regular demand.

In June 1729 William Cordeux was instructed on his arrival in Kirmān "to send for all the Goatherds and others who Deal in Wool and agree with them for

[21] Gombroon, 28 September 1752. Saldanha, *Selections*.

[22] For a clear account see Amin, pp. 29–41.

[23] The Court to the Agent and Council in Persia, London, 30 September 1684. Saldanha, *Selections*.

[24] At a Consultation, Gombroon, 25 February 1726/7, IOR, G/29/2.

[25] William Henry Draper to W. Cordeux and J. Fotheringham, Gombroon, 28 April 1727, IOR, G/29/3.

[26] Gombroon, 31 May 1727, IOR, G/29/3.

[27] Gombroon, 6 July 1727, IOR, G/29/3.

as much red wool as possible but not white".[28] Since the merchants would not sell red wool alone he had to contract for mixed wool. In 1736 a shortage of Kirmān wool was caused by the requirements of Nādir Shāh's military clothiers.[29] By 1747 the agent in Gombroon doubted whether the amount of Kirmān wool specified could be procured because, this time, Nādir Shāh's oppressions had forced the people "to sell their goats in the market to raise money for their tax & the village circumjacent had been plundered & their goats destroyed".[30] Edward Ives, who visited Gombroon in 1758, described it as a "place of no kind of consequence except what it received from the English and Dutch factories". He observed that "constant wars and their attendent confusion and anarchy deprived England of almost all their commercial advantages, and the place of almost all its inhabitants". Nevertheless, it was to this place that the Company sent fine quality woollen cloth and some lead in return for Kirmān wool and copper.[31]

Under its Charters the East India Company undertook to export British goods. This meant mostly woollen textiles which, according to the Venetian ambassador in 1610, formed the chief wealth of Britain. Interest in Iranian markets was stirred in 1614 when Richard Steel reported that the East India Company might be assured "of the vent of much cloth, in regard their country is much cold and men, women and children are clothed therewith some five months in the year".[32] Both at Bombay and in the Persian Gulf, representatives of the Company received frequent reminders of the high priority attached to the sale of their annual consignments of British woollens. As it was put in instructions to Francis Wood, "Your utmost abilities and attention must on all occasions be exerted to promote the consumption of British Woolen Manufacture at Bunderrieck [Bandar Rīg], which is the Chief reason of your being employed there."[33] John Horne had years earlier written from Gombroon of his hopes that the kingdom would settle so that the consumption of woollen goods would greatly increase. "It shall be my duty", he wrote, "to Improve the Vend

[28] Instructions to William Cordeux, Gombroon, 16 June 1729, IOR, G/29/4.

[29] Bombay Castle, February 1740–1, Public Department Diary, no. 4 of 1740–1. Saldanha, *Selections*. See also letters from John Horne, Gombroon, 2 April 1731, 11 May and 26 December 1732; and William Cockell, Gombroon, 24 May 1733, 28 January 1736/7 and 15 December 1737, IOR, G/29/15.

[30] Bombay Castle, 27 March 1747. Public Department Diary, no. 20 of 1747. Saldanha, *Selections*.

[31] Ives, *Voyage*, pp. 198–9, 201–2. Cf. Hamilton, pp. 92–4 and Plaisted, *Journey*, pp. 6–13, 24. See also Bal Krishna, *Commercial Relations between India and England, 1601–1757* (London, 1924).

[32] Quoted in "Summary: The Second Period, 1614–1617". Saldanha, *Selections*. Foster, *East India Company Letters*, II, p. 169.

[33] Commission and Instruction from the Governor in Council, Bombay, to Francis Wood, Bombay Castle, 18 October 1754. Saldanha, *Selections*.

of that commodity to the utmost as well as to Encrease the Wool Investment, for I am very sensible how advantageous these two Branches are to my Hon'ble Employers."[34]

To avoid total loss, in the 18th century quantities of cloth went to Iran but there keen demand was increasingly combined with inability to pay. The quality of the goods was high. Care was taken to ascertain and meet Iranian needs and taste. According to one set of statistics, in 1753 of 2,700 bales of woollen manufactured goods for the India and China trade, some 600 went to the Persian Gulf; mainly to Iran. Other figures for later years confirm this trend: e.g. 1,060 out of 1,234 for 1756; and 1,089 out of 3,657 in 1759.[35] Writing in March 1758 the Court of Directors told the agent at Bandar ᶜAbbās of a sizable consignment of woollen goods being sent "for the Persia Market". Colours in a variety "usually sent for the Turkey Market" were mentioned, but the agent was enjoined to be "very particular in finding out those that are best liked as well as those that are disliked" in Iran. He was also urged to attempt purchasing Kirmān wool of "the Red Sort" without the black and white, on which, "owing to the high price it was purchased at", loss had been incurred.[36]

After three poor years in 1761–3 the Persian Gulf trade once more improved as shown by the sale of 1,581 out of 5,653 bales in 1764; but the sharp decline witnessed in 1768 became continuous. In 1783–4, only 145 bales were sold at Baṣra and none at Bushire. The total net loss on sales of woollens at Baṣra in the decade 1780–1 to 1789–90 was £11,305; at Bushire it was £1,232.[37] Sir Harford Jones recalled that in his time at Baṣra the average loss had amounted to about 16 per cent "altho' these Sales were managed by Persons of the strictist Integrity & great Ability, Messrs. Latouche & Manesty".[38]

The vigour of the Persian Gulf trade in the 1750s calls for explanation and several have been offered. First, the dispersal of Nādir Shāh's immense booty from India contributed in the short term to increased prosperity. It has been asserted that long before the century ended India had recovered by trade the riches Nādir Shāh had taken by conquest. William Milburn described the trade between Iran and India as "very considerable", but he noted that most of Iran's products were not suited to the Indian market. A steady drain on Iran in gold

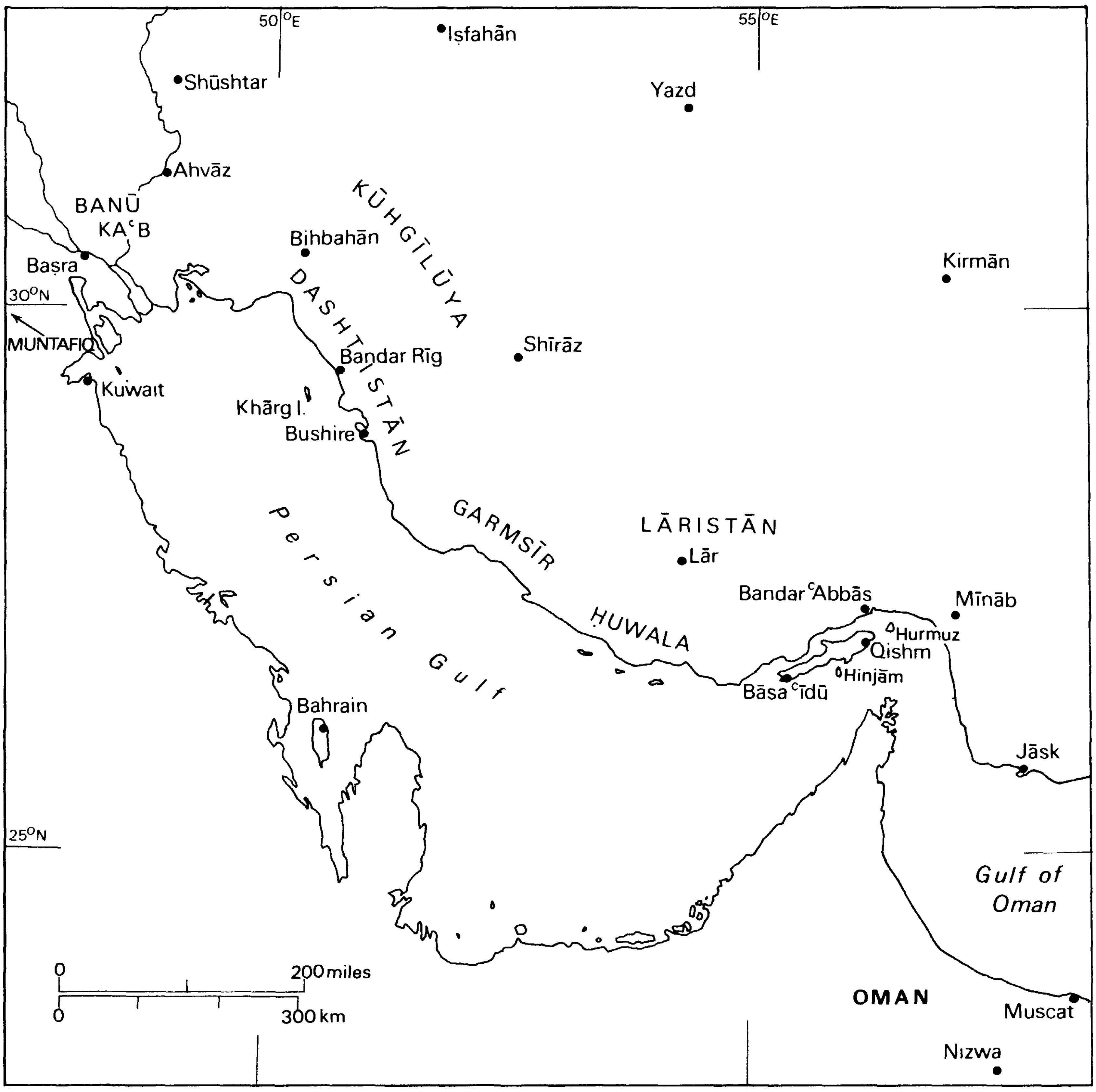
[34] Letter from John Horne, Gombroon, 31 December 1729, IOR, G/29/15.

[35] Amin, pp. 40–1, 151.

[36] From the Court of Directors to the Agent and Council at Gombroon, London, 29 March 1758. Saldanha, *Selections*.

[37] Amin, *loc. cit. Three Reports of the Select Committee*, pp. 125–9. See also BT6/42 for original correspondence, Public Record Office.

[38] Harford Jones, Remarks on a trade report relating to the Persian Gulf, Bagdad, 10 October 1800. Kentchurch Court MSS, 8381.



Map 9. The Persian Gulf in the 18th century

and silver resulted, since hardly a third of Iran's imports from India was returnable in goods.[39] An East India Company report to the Privy Council in 1793 put it at one-fifth. As so few Iranian products were marketable in India the balance had to be paid for in precious metals.[40] But the trade between Iran and India was centuries old and, from the original founding of the East India Company until the latter part of the 18th century, that trade had involved British private traders and British shipping. F.P. Robinson noted that the Iranian trade,

[39] William Milburn, *Oriental Commerce; containing a Geographical Description of the principal places in the East Indies, China and Japan, etc.* (London, 1813), I, p. 122. For the specie drain as a continuing problem see Avery and Simmons, "Persia on a Cross of Silver, 1880–1890", and Amīn, p. 134.

[40] *Three Reports*, pp. 117–19.

while not of prime importance to the East India Company, "contributed largely to the income of the Western Presidency [i.e. Bombay]".[41]

In 1754 the decision was taken to establish a factory at Bandar Rīg.[42] This reflected the need to find a place less exposed to piratical Arabs and raiding tribal chiefs. It also seemed necessary to move nearer to the head of the Gulf to meet the competition from the Levant Company, the Dutch on Khārg, and the French, who were beginning to make headway in the woollen market. The local ruler at Bandar Rīg encouraged Europeans. Through the resident at Baṣra he invited the British to build a factory. The Court of Directors approved this enterprise and entrusted its execution to the former agent at Bandar ʿAbbās, Francis Wood. In 1755 he received an appropriate *raqam* (decree) from Karīm Khān and began construction. Upon hearing disquieting news from the Dutch, Wood left Bandar Rīg without warning the local authorities of possible trouble. Mīr Muhannā brought about a murderous revolution in 1756 and used the Company's buildings as materials for a city wall. Wood, authorized to retaliate and rebuild, was given the use of Company vessels for this purpose. Since Wood refused to act because he considered the forces inadequate, the Bandar Rīg undertaking collapsed.[43]

Because of disturbances around Bandar ʿAbbās and simultaneous disruptions which suspended trade around Kirmān, the British company searched for a more suitable place in the Persian Gulf. The French had delivered a crushing blow by capturing the Gombroon agency in 1759, but some of the damage done by fire and plunder occurred after the French had departed. In 1760 a letter from Gombroon reported

> That the interior parts of Persia were still in the utmost confusion and Carem Caun who had been endeavoring to bring the empire under his subjection met with so many powerful competitors that he really believed he would not succeed.[44]

This soon changed: by 1762 Karīm Khān's rivals were in the "utmost awe and subjection, so that he is really possessed of the Sovereign power", though he had not assumed the royal title.[45]

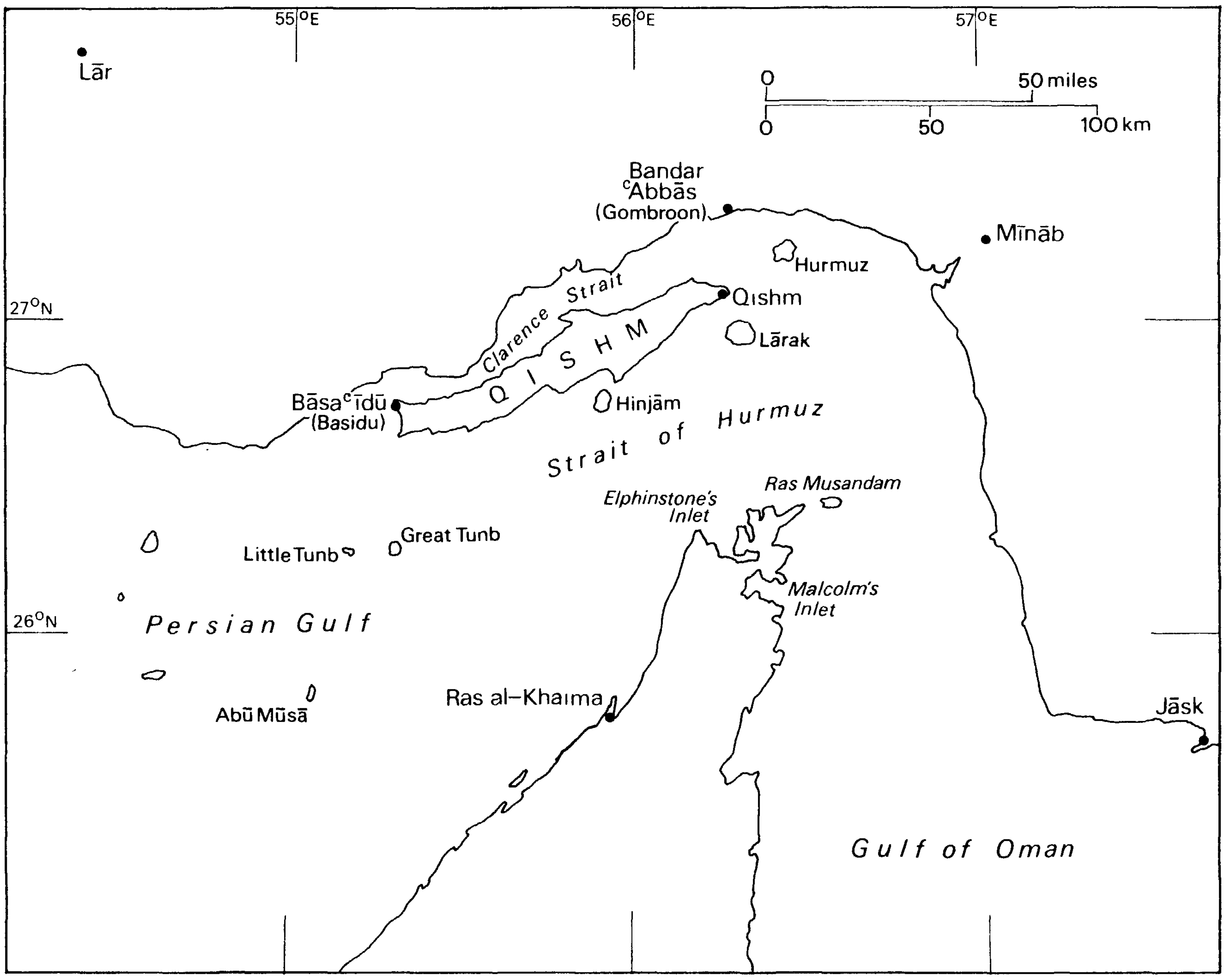
[41] *Trade of the East India Company 1700–1813* (Cambridge, 1912), p. 58. On the country trade, see Holden Furber, *Rival Empires of Trade in the Orient, 1600–1800*, ch. 6.

[42] For affairs up to the death of Karīm Khān see Amin, *Persian Gulf*, and Perry, *Karim Khan Zand*. The correspondence in IOR, G/29/6–13, 15–17, and 21 is invaluable.

[43] Commission and Instruction from the Governor in Council, Bombay, to Mr Francis Wood, 18 October 1754. See also Wood's accounts, 3 May 1756 and undated following letter, Saldanha, *Selections*.

[44] Public Department Diary no. 35, Bombay Castle, 14 October 1760. Saldanha, *Selections*.

[45] James Stuart to Court of Directors, Basra, 12 June 1762, IOR, G/29/16.



Map 10. The Strait of Hurmuz

In casting about for another headquarters, Hurmuz was thought unsuitable. In 1762 the London Directors gave instructions that the old factory at Bandar ᶜAbbās be withdrawn and a new one established elsewhere. Consequently, in 1763 a factory was founded at Baṣra. Bandar ᶜAbbās (Gombroon), one of the earliest British factories in the Persian Gulf, was closed. Until the plague in 1773, Baṣra became the pivot of the British position in the Gulf. It had drawbacks. Both Turks and Iranians vied for authority over it, as did others, including the Kaᶜb and the Muntafiq Arabs.

In the course of investigations made in 1761, Alexander Douglas had been favourably impressed by Bushire. It had a thriving merchant community and roads into the interior, being only fourteen days' journey from Shīrāz and thirty from Iṣfahān. Shaikh Nāṣir invited the company to settle there, and, as directed from London and Bombay, the agent at Baṣra, William Price, negotiated terms with the shaikh for a factory. He instructed Benjamin Jervis, Resident at Bushire, "more particularly to introduce the vend of Woollen Goods into the Kingdom of Persia." Price concluded: "the Country from this place to Ispahan

being entirely under the Command of Carem Caun whom it is generally allowed governs with great justice and moderation gives us good hopes of success."[46] In July 1763, Karīm Khān gave the Company[47] a monopoly over the woollen trade in all Iranian ports, exclusive rights to build a factory at Bushire, and other advantageous commercial terms, such as exemptions from duties. In return, Karīm Khān secured that Iranian merchandise would be accepted in payment, or part payment, for British goods in order to reduce the export of specie. He also hoped for British assistance in consolidating his rule in the south, and offered to pay for British help in subjugating Mīr Muhannā at Bandar Rīg. In 1764 he directly requested British aid. The Bombay Government gave a limited authority for a loan of vessels. This Anglo-Iranian undertaking was badly co-ordinated and failed miserably, so that Mīr Muhannā's position was further strengthened.

British involvement with the Banū Kaᶜb (a local Arab tribe in the area of the River Kārūn) complicated relations with Karīm Khān.[48] The Banū Kaᶜb had in earlier years been subject to the Turks and occupied substantial territory bordering on Iran, for which an annual payment was made to the Ottoman Pasha at Baṣra. After Nādir Shāh's death the Kaᶜb spread into Iranian territory, thereby becoming subject to both Turks and Iranians. Turkish authority declined, disturbances continued in Iran, while the influence of local tribes increased. The Banū Kaᶜb grew independent. By refusing to pay any annual tribute they accumulated wealth. When able, both their suzerains claimed arrears of revenue. The Turks had been engaged in hostilities with the Kaᶜb since 1761. Karīm Khān moved against them in 1765. To counter these threats, the Banū Kaᶜb developed their maritime strength. Unable to defeat them although he had hurt them severely, Karīm Khān made an accommodation and used them militarily against the Turks, and as a lever in his negotiations with the British.

The Banū Kaᶜb had seized some British vessels just after the attack on Mīr Muhannā was abandoned. The Government of Bombay sent several vessels with detachments of infantry and artillery to Baṣra to act in concert with the Turks against the Banū Kaᶜb. In September 1766 when the British and Turks were besieging the Banū Kaᶜb, Karīm Khān claimed them as Iranian subjects and insisted that the Turks and British withdraw. The Turks complied, but the

[46] William Price to Benjamin Jervis, Bushire, 20 April 1763. Saldanha, *Selections*.

[47] Royal Grant, 2 July 1763. IOR, G/29/16.

[48] Perry, "The Banu Kaᶜb"; Sir Arnold Wilson, *A Précis of the Relations of the British Government with the Tribes and Shaikhs of Arabistan*.

British protested. They asked for and received substantial reinforcements from Bombay. Land operations were not resumed because of the arrival of Karīm Khān's envoy at Baṣra to treat on his behalf. The British continued their sea-blockade until 1768 when it was lifted after the death of the forceful Banū Kaʿb leader, Shaikh Salmān.

The Bombay Presidency saw Karīm Khān as the key to trade in Iran. They wanted the right to build a factory in Iran at a site of their choice, and control over an island in the Gulf – preferably Khārg – or at the least they wanted to be sure that no other European power should control it. The Company's agent at Baṣra, Henry Moore, who was responsible for conducting these negotiations, seems thoroughly to have distrusted Iranians, and especially Karīm Khān. He sent one of his staff, George Skipp, whom he also disliked, to Shīrāz, while simultaneously he wrote to the Directors in London outlining his objections to the policy being pursued. With an agent at Baṣra who was working actively for a reversal of the policy determined upon in Bombay, and with a representative in Shīrāz with little authority, the stage was set for a split between London and Bombay, as well as for unsatisfactory relations with Iran.

The Bombay Presidency, in attempting to reach a diplomatic settlement with Karīm Khān, had agreed reluctantly to join with Iranian forces against Mīr Muhannā, who threatened British trade not only by sea but also by interfering with the caravan traffic with Shīrāz. The Presidency instructions of January 1767 for the guidance of the negotiator sent to Shīrāz directed him to try to obtain the following:

1. Confirmation of earlier grants for settling at Bushire, expressly giving permission to build there any fort or factory thought proper and to fortify it as necessary.
2. An annual sum of at least 20,000 to 25,000 rupees to be paid the Company from the rent of the customs of Bushire, to meet the expense of keeping a cruiser always in the Gulf.
3. Grant of any one of the islands in the Gulf considered most suitable for settlement if it were required.
4. Compensation for losses out of booty which might be taken from the Banū Kaʿb, whose vessels, if not destroyed or surrendered, were not again to be employed against England.
5. Claim on half of booty of whatsoever nature taken from Mīr Muhannā.
6. In the event of a successful joint expedition against Mīr Muhannā it was agreed that Karīm Khān might keep Khārg if he undertook not to deliver it to any European power other than British.

It was further desired to promote the trade in raw silk from Gīlān. A present to Karīm Khān not exceeding 10,000 rupees was authorized.[49]

Karīm Khān held that, as his subjects, the Banū Kaʿb should be threatened neither by the British nor the Turks. He agreed to see that the British were compensated for their losses. He offered to pay for British help against Mīr Muhannā, and to give them Khārg when Mīr Muhannā was destroyed. Henry Moore at Baṣra recalled his representative at Shīrāz and strongly recommended rejection of these terms. He proposed that the British, cooperating with the Turks and even with Mīr Muhannā, should move against both the Banū Kaʿb and Karīm Khān. The Bombay Government disagreed, ordered acceptance of Karīm Khān's proposals, and sent ships for another joint operation against Mīr Muhannā, who was then on Khārg; but in London the Court of Directors accepted Moore's arguments. They had always foreseen disagreeable consequences from a settlement at Bushire. They disapproved of negotiating with Karīm Khān, wanted neither a quarrel with Mīr Muhannā, nor a residency under the protection of such a notorious robber, and recommended that the Gīlān silk enterprise be dropped. They were too late: Skipp was already back in Shīrāz where in 1768 he made an agreement with Karīm Khān, and it included provision for a joint expedition against Khārg. Moore, who had the local British forces under his authority, ordered the attack before the Iranian troops had assembled and arrived from Shīrāz. The British sustained considerable damage and casualties so that their commander suspended the attack until the Iranians arrived. Moore then ordered the ships back to India: when the Iranians eventually came, the British had gone.

In March 1769 a revolution drove Mīr Muhannā from Khārg. He sought refuge in Baṣra but was there ignominiously put to death by the Ottoman authorities for his outrageous conduct. The representatives of the Company considered that the Mīr ought to have been turned over to his rightful sovereign, Karīm Khān, but in any event the end of Mīr Muhannā was a relief to merchants in the Gulf.

Because of uncertainties about Mīr Muhannā and Khārg, the British Resident at Bushire, James Morley, withdrew in February 1769 to Baṣra, ending direct relations with Iran, a move of which Moore at Baṣra approved. Moore, whose relations with Bombay had become acrimonious, endeavoured to gain a British footing on Khārg, but retreated when the Governor resisted and claimed Karīm Khān's protection. Moore's proceedings had been thoroughly unacceptable to

[49] To Peter Elwin Wrench, Agent for all Affairs of the British Nation in the Gulph of Persia and Council at Bussora, Bombay Castle, 18 January 1767. Saldanha, *Selections*.

Bombay: his handling of the joint military venture with Karīm Khān, orders to Skipp to annul all engagements and leave Shīrāz, and finally the withdrawal of the Bushire Residency. The Bombay Government was in favour of again approaching Karīm Khān.

Much discussion regarding the relative merits of Baṣra and Bushire ensued.[50] One committee reported that Bushire was well suited for the wool trade into Iran, with a branch silk trade with Gīlān. Shortage of specie had already forced Karīm Khān to accept part of his revenues in silk, hence it was predicted that he would take two or three lakhs of rupees in woollens annually in return for raw silk. The committee considered that Iranian merchants would trade with the British in Bushire in preference to trading with Russian merchants in the northern provinces, while British traders with Baṣra faced insecure roads by land, pirates by sea, and customs duties either way. By expenses thus saved, trading with Bushire could add 20% to what the seller at Bushire could safely charge the buyer. Moreover, the decline of Ottoman power and influence, and the growing strength of the Banū Kaʿb and Muntafiq Arabs seemed to doom Baṣra to years of instability. The Wahhābīs were also beginning to cause concern. By contrast, Karīm Khān had steadily gained strength. In 1765 the Carmelite Bishop Cornelius of Iṣfahān listed the towns and provinces under Karīm Khān's control as: Iṣfahān, Shūshtar, Shīrāz, Gīlān, Tabrīz, Āẕarbāījān, Hamadān, as well as part of Greater Armenia and Luristān, his native province. The Bishop added that "various other usurpers" controlled other regions, including Khurāsān, Qandahar, and Lār from Kirmān to Bandar ʿAbbās. Further afield, the Uzbeks had their own chief, and Sind, Hurmuz, Muscat, Georgia, Balūchistān and various other provinces were also under independent rulers. Except for Bushire, individual Arab chiefs held the towns and ports of the Persian Gulf.[51] Nevertheless, Karīm Khān had subsequently consolidated and extended his power. By 1769 he was in a position to threaten an expedition against the Imam of Muscat for the return of an Iranian ship and arrears of the annual tribute formerly paid to Nādir Shāh. The Imam responded that Nādir Shāh had been a dreaded tyrant but Karīm Khān was only a provincial *vakīl*, to be answered, if his demands persisted, with "Cannon and ball". The British were apprehensive: the dispute threatened to disrupt further the Muscat coffee fleet on which they levied customs at Baṣra. In 1765, coffee from Muscat to Baṣra,

[50] For an account of Mīr Muhannā's death, see Agent and Council at Basrah to the Presidency, 2 April 1769. Saldanha, *Selections*. Thereafter see Report of committee appointed to report about settling an agency at Bushire, Bombay Castle, 3 November 1769. Saldanha, *Selections*. See also Lorimer, Appendix Q. [51] *Chronicle of the Carmelites* II, pp. 644–5.

conveyed in one of the Imam's men-of-war, had been unloaded at a Dutch warehouse on Khārg for fear of the Kaᶜb. Mīr Muhannā raided this warehouse early in 1766. In the next year, over a thousand bales of coffee had been collected at Muscat, whence they could not be shipped to Baṣra because of Mīr Muhannā's ravages. To supply a convoy for the coffee would annoy Karīm Khān further: a settlement with him seemed even more urgent, yet the London authorities expressly vetoed an establishment at Bushire or elsewhere in Iran (any existing settlement was to be withdrawn), since such an agency's costs would offset any increased profit from its sales. Further embassies to Karīm Khān were forbidden.[52]

Moreover, the East India Company in London gave additional proof of its perturbation over affairs in the Gulf when, in March 1769, it approached the British government, something it did not do lightly, and asked for a naval expedition to the Persian Gulf. It pleaded that, being "embroiled" with "almost every Power" in the Gulf, the Company's interests were materially disrupted, to the injury of British and Indian trade. The "Commerce between Persia and Bengal" was in particular "exposed to the Depredations lately suffered from ... Maritime Enemies" in the region. This plea went as high as George III who determined that restoration of peace and security in the Gulf should receive full support. The expedition of Sir John Lindsay followed. He was given wide powers in Indian affairs and plenipotentiary powers in those of the Persian Gulf.[53]

Lindsay sailed in September 1769 but by the time he reached his destination Mīr Muhannā was dead, the Banū Kaᶜb were no longer a threat, the British blockade had been lifted and Karīm Khān's authority had been extended to Khārg, whose *vālī* was the Admiral of the Iranian fleet. Lindsay sent one ship to the Gulf to investigate and concerned himself with India. In April 1770 he reported that since Karīm Khān had gained Khārg island, trade had been carried on without difficulty, and that the Khān was "by all accounts" a great Prince.[54]

So much for a rare instance of direct British government intervention in the affairs of southern Iran and the Gulf before 1800; but it was soon to become evident how powerful in the area Karīm Khān had become when three years after Lindsay's appraisal of him he held a British factor hostage as a persuasive to

[52] Letter from the Hon'ble Company to Bussorah respecting the Bushire Factory, London, 24 August 1770; Extract from the Bussorah Factory Diary No. 8 of 1769–70. Saldanha, *Selections*.

[53] East India House to Viscount Weymouth, 17 March 1769 and accompanying "Narrative of the Rise and Progress of the Troubles in the Gulph of Persia"; Viscount Weymouth to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the East India Company, 8 May 1769, IOR, G/29/21.

[54] John Lindsay to Mr Wood, Bombay, 5 April 1770, IOR, G/29/21.

the Company to reopen their Bushire factory, part of his scheme to eliminate Baṣra from the Indian-Iranian trade. Plague in 1773 at Baṣra forced the factors there to take ship for India. Vessels from Bandar Rīg seized one of the Company's ships and held Beaumont and Green, two British agents, prisoner, sending them to Karīm Khān at Shīrāz whence Green was sent to Baṣra with Karīm Khān's terms while Beaumont was kept in Shīrāz as a hostage, to emphasize Karīm Khān's desire that the Bushire factory should be reopened.

Karīm Khān was fortunate in his timing. Financial difficulties which resulted, in combination with other causes, in the 1773 Regulating Act, preoccupied the Company in London. Hastings, in the middle of reforms of the Indian administration and having troubles with the Marathas, had more urgent business in India than in Iran. He could spare no troops, ships or money for that quarter. Karīm Khān's hostage-taking and the theft of the eight-gun *Tyger* in the Gulf only produced a diplomatic response.

Robert Garden, another East India Company servant, and a former Agent in Council at Baṣra, reached Bushire in April 1775 to negotiate with Karīm Khān. It was the very day Karīm Khān's brother laid siege to Baṣra, where Abraham Parsons ascribed the act to the determination of the ruler of Shīrāz to destroy Baṣra's monopoly of the Indian trade, which was so much to Iran's detriment. Moore had gone back to Baṣra the year before and now energetically helped in its defence against Karīm Khān's forces, even asking London for aid, a request which was refused. Iranian ships appearing from Bushire hastened Moore's departure, but as his vessels sailed down the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab, he had his chance to engage the Iranians and drive their ships into the mouth of the Kārūn. It was an Omani fleet which eventually reopened the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab to the passage of supplies, but in April 1776 Baṣra had to capitulate.

Garden had already obtained Beaumont's release from Karīm Khān, who was satisfied that the Bushire factory would be restored. As master of Baṣra he promised that the Company's property there would be duly protected. Thus when Karīm Khān died in 1779 there were again two East Indian Company factories in the Persian Gulf, one at Baṣra and, quite contrary to explicit instructions from the Board in London, another at Bushire.

In the turbulent period after Karīm Khān's death two contending groups, the Qājārs and the Zands, resumed their competition for supremacy. When Karīm Khān breathed his last in 1779, Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār, at that time a prisoner in Shīrāz, escaped. He and his family had suffered much at the hands of both Afsharids and Zands. ʿĀdil Shāh, in his brief rule following Nādir Shāh's death, had ordered Āghā Muḥammad Khān's emasculation. Following his

father's fatal contest with the Zands, Āgha Muḥammad Khān became Karīm Khān's hostage. Although he enjoyed much freedom in Zand custody, he nursed bitter hatred for the Zands and entertained the thought of taking the sovereignty of Persia from them.

Following the outcome of a series of ferocious succession struggles, Karīm Khān's nephew, Jaᶜfar Khān, consolidated his authority over much of the south, with Shīrāz as his headquarters, but, visiting Shīrāz in 1787, the Company agent, Harford Jones, saw that both Zand and Qājār leaders would be in competition with each other and each would have to contend with disaffection in his armies. But he considered the fact that Āghā Muḥammad Khān was a eunuch advanced in years was a great disadvantage to the Qājār cause since further succession struggles following his death would be inevitable. By contrast, the promising qualities of Jaᶜfar Khān's son, Luṭf ᶜAlī, were an advantage for the Zands, while Āghā Muḥammad Khān's brothers were looked upon as men of the "most abandoned principles" whose sole ambition was plunder. Moreover, Jaᶜfar Khān seemed to enjoy firm support in the provinces over which he ruled, and especially from the merchant community.[55]

All through the 18th century French activity in the area of the Gulf waxed and waned. The British watched the signs anxiously. William Latouche in Baghdad in 1784 wrote apprehensively of energetic French enterprise and the journey of two Frenchmen to Iṣfahān.[56] In 1785 and 1786 Samuel Manesty at Baṣra reported French ships first at Muscat, where they met with a "cool reception", since the depredations of French privateers there in 1781 had not been forgotten, and subsequently at Baṣra, where the Kaᶜb were hostile.[57] While in Shīrāz in 1787, Jones took alarm at the visit of another French ship to Muscat, and foresaw designs on Bandar Rīg and Khārg. Orders issued to the provincial government to prevent any French settlement on Khārg probably owed something to Jones's influence. Jaᶜfar Khān was, commented Jones, "reluctant to permit Foreigners to possess any part of Persia".[58]

In 1787 the relative merits of Baṣra and Bushire were again being considered

[55] Harford Jones to Edward Galley, Shiraz, 21 July 1787; to Rawson Hart Boddam, 13 July 1787; to the Dean of Windsor, 25 July 1787. For his audience with Jaᶜfar Khān, see his letters to Samuel Manesty, 27 May 1787 and John Griffith, 23 June 1787, Kentchurch Court MSS, 9210.

[56] William Latouche to Samuel Manesty, Bagdad, 29 December 1784. IOR, G/29/18. See also S.P. Sen, *The French in India, 1783–1816* (Calcutta, 1958).

[57] Samuel Manesty to Secret Committee of Court of Directors, Basra, 9 October 1785; Manesty to East India Company, 27 October 1786. IOR, G/29/18.

[58] Harford Jones to Edward Galley, Shiraz, 11 June 1787; to Samuel Manesty, 7 July 1787. Kentchurch Court MSS, 9210.

by the British, this time by Jones and Manesty. Manesty favoured Baṣra particularly as Shaikh Thuwainī of the Muntafiq Arabs was in control there, issuing enlightened regulations which augured well for trade. Jones argued in favour of Bushire's potential for attracting the entire Gulf commerce. He thought that the Turkish Pasha would never acquiesce in Shaikh Thuwainī's continuing rule over Baṣra, and would be bound to attack him, so that Baṣra would continue to be a battleground, to the ruin of the local trade. Jones also wanted to open a factory at Shīrāz to work in conjunction with Bushire. He argued that, if the Company really wanted to make Kirmān wool a part of their European investment, it was at Shīrāz that negotiations should take place. A contract should be concluded with the local merchants for the purchase and delivery of an annual quantity of wool at Bushire. In 1786 the Court of Directors had asked why none of this once-regular item of trade had been received for several years, and directed that red and white wool (as much red as possible) be sent to England.[59] When this request reached Baṣra in 1787 Kirmān wool was not available, and subsequent enquiries by Jones and Manesty estimated that the annual quantity of Kirmān wool available on the market amounted to 3,000 Tabrīz maunds. (In 1764 a Tabrīz maund was said to amount to between 7.38 and 6.66 English pounds in weight.) In any event, Jaᶜfar Khān had prohibited the export of Kirmān wool. As he collected duty on shawls manufactured in the province of Kirmān it appears that he aimed at protecting his own nascent industry. Some wool, however, did reach outside markets illegally, and it was thought that Jaᶜfar Khān, if approached in the proper manner, might lift his ban. Since he wanted four field-pieces from Bombay, complete with gunners, Jones considered a deal that would include wool possible.[60]

Jaᶜfar Khān issued a *farmān* eminently favourable to English interests, but it did not inaugurate fruitful commercial co-operation between Britain and Iran. Nor was the long-standing conflict between Jaᶜfar Khān and his Qājār rival decided on the battlefield. Jones and Manesty in their letter of 25 March 1789 informed the Secret Committee of his murder on 20 January by rival kinsmen

[59] At a Consultation, Bombay, 1 November 1786. Bombay Commercial Diary, 1786–7. IOR, Range 414/47. Samuel Manesty to Court of Directors, Basra, 15 March 1787. IOR, G/29/18. At a Consultation, Bombay, 30 May 1788. IOR, Bombay Commercial Diary, 1788, Range 414/48. For later interest see Consultation, Bombay, 18 November 1791. IOR, Bombay Commercial Diary, 1791, Range 414/50.

[60] 9 May 1787. Bombay Diary, 1786–7, IOR, Range 414/47. Harford Jones to Edward Galley, Shiraz, 23 May and 9 July 1787; Basra, 24 January 1788. Kentchurch Court MSS, 9210. For the weight of a Tabriz maund in 1764 see Public Department no. 42 of 1764, 1 and 15 May 1764. IOR, G/29/18. See also Appendix K in Saldanha, *Selections*, IOR.

whom he had been holding prisoner. His twenty-year-old son, Luṭf ʿAlī, took refuge in Bushire.[61] He gallantly and resourcefully continued a losing battle with the Qājārs until, betrayed during the siege of Kirmān, he was taken prisoner at Bam, blinded, and sent to Tehran, where he was strangled in 1794. Āghā Muḥammad Khān's revenge included frightful massacres and destruction in former Zand territories. These extreme measures completely disrupted the Kirmān wool trade. Jones reported that it was the "terrible Desolation that Aga Mahammed Khan ... carried into the Province of Kerman in the year 1793/4 that injuriously affected the Stock and consequently the breed of goats & *not the want of Attention in the Inhabitants*". He related how, earlier, during their former contests, the Zand and Qājār leaders had protected trade, each party aiming at the "complete destruction" of the family of the other, and needing the revenue which only production and commerce could provide. Hence "the safe passage of Carravans ... was respected".[62] Now, as victor, Āghā Muḥammad was pursuing a "scorched earth" policy. Not surprisingly, in the last quarter of the 18th century the Company's trade with Iran declined. The factories at Bushire and Baṣra stayed open only with difficulty. The Resident at Bushire had to make extensive repairs to the Company's buildings in 1779–80, since heavy rains had "destroyed a fourth part of this Rotten Factory, and the rest is in Danger of falling from every Shower". Disturbed conditions coupled with a personal dispute at Baṣra in 1792 caused the Company's establishment, and its small sepoy guard, to move temporarily to Qurain [Kuwait].[63]

Karīm Khān, described as "deficient in the accomplishments of Literature and Politeness", had nevertheless seemed to appreciate what tended to Persia's advantage, "embracing and comprehending the more complicated, and extensive schemes, for its prosperity". He undertook numerous measures to promote trade and manufacture and to bring back people lost through emigration. But much of his time was spent in establishing his ascendancy and little remained for consolidating gains and overseeing development. As has been seen, violent disturbances followed his death. Although, in the eyes of Jones and Manesty at least, Jaʿfar Khān and Luṭf ʿAlī Khān showed a "disposition to protect and

[61] At a Bombay Consultation, 11 January 1785 the following was recorded: "Having this day come to a Resolution to separate the Secret and Political Department from the public ... all the subordinates be advised immediately of this division in the business and be directed that when they have occasion to write to us on Political Affairs and ... foreign Nations or on any subject of whatever nature which may require secrecey they will in future address us in our Secret and Political Department." Saldanha, *Selections*.

[62] "Remarks", 10 October 1800. Kentchurch Court MSS, 8381.

[63] John Beaumont to the Presidency, Bushire, 5 February 1780. Saldanha, *Selections*. Brydges, *An Account of His Majesty's Mission* II, pp. 11–15.

encourage foreigners in their trade"[64] similar to Karīm Khān's, neither had time to bring their objectives to fruition. In 1792 Luṭf ʿAlī Khān's seizure of Bushire and blockade of Shīrāz in his desperate struggle against Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār caused the Resident at Bushire to report that, "although many revolutions have happened of late years in this country", these were the most injurious incidents to date.[65] Yet in 1793, with over a year to go before the Qājār's final defeat of Luṭf ʿAlī Khān, the optimistic vision of a potential prosperity, apparently so hard to realize, is seen in one of the East India Company's reports to the Privy Council, which referred to the extraordinary advantages Iran derived from its geography. Sharing an Iranian tendency to look back on the halcyon days of the Safavids, the report stated that to geographical advantages might be added recollections of former times "of prosperity, affluence, and splendour, with fertility of soil and . . . numerous natural productions", so that it would be reasonable "to form great expectations from such a combination of circumstances". However, it was seen that only the "peace and tranquility which . . . results from a steady well-regulated government" could turn these natural advantages to good effect.[66] This report may have been influenced by the hopefulness of Harford Jones, but even he had likened Iran to "a Paradise inhabited by Devils".[67]

In the 1780s and 1790s, Gulf trade shifted from Baṣra to Muscat. First plague, and then Baṣra's capitulation to the Zands and later to the Muntafiq Arabs, had destroyed it as the Gulf's main commercial emporium. There had long been a serious specie drain from Iran, not only to India through trade, but also arising from the pilgrim traffic to the Shīʿī Holy Places in Iraq, and to Mecca. This had also affected Baghdad and Baṣra. Moreover, throughout the area political convulsions resulted in depopulation and emigration. Baṣra, Bushire and both the Company's and private trade suffered; but outside the Strait of Hurmuz, Muscat showed a contrasting increase in wealth. Gone were the days when the Imam had to purchase peace from the Zands after Karīm Khān had mastered Baṣra. Muscat itself now had a respected naval force. Its ships traded with India, Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula, East Africa and the Yemen. Goods entering the Persian Gulf generally passed through Muscat and

[64] Report on the Commerce of Arabia and Persia by Samuel Manesty and Harford Jones, 15 August 1790. Appendix F. Saldanha, *Selections*. For manuscript copy and covering letter to this important report see IOR, G/29/21. See also Jones's "Remarks", 10 October 1800. Kentchurch Court MSS, 8381. Furber, *Bombay Presidency* and *John Company at Work* provide useful background.

[65] Charles Watkins to the Presidency, Bushire, 1 June 1792. Saldanha, *Selections*.

[66] *Three Reports*, p. 113.

[67] Harford Jones to William Francklin, Basra, 21 December 1787. Kentchurch Court MSS, 9120.

paid customs there. Kuwait's and Baḥrain's trade also showed an upward trend, but not to the same degree as that of Muscat.

Jones and Manesty singled out Muscat in their comprehensive Arabian and Iranian trade review of 1790. They attributed Oman's increased "exertions" and their success to three factors. First, the decline and eventual "extinction" of "the Commerce of Gombroon". Secondly, the impetus to ship-building which initial advantages in mercantile ventures gave. Dhows and "Dingies" had increased in size as well as numbers, and "private merchants" of Muscat "caused square rigged Vessels of different kinds and considerable Burthen, to be constructed for them in different Parts of India". Thirdly, Muscat's development as a major port, with its merchants trading far afield, caused it to be "frequented by the Vessels of European Nations", and made it "a more rich and flourishing Sea Port than any of those bordering on the Persian Gulf". An additional factor was the Imam's appointment of an effective and just deputy to govern the port, so that merchants' persons and property were considered immune from violation.

The commerce at Gombroon (Bandar ʿAbbās) was indeed extinct. The Dutch factory remained, but those of the English and French were in ruins. The road thence to Iṣfahān had for years been unsafe and unused. Bushire was the only port of importance on the Gulf coast of Iran, but the specie problem inhibited its trade with India because Iran required money rather than goods in exchange for its exports. Further, as Jones and Manesty observed, "the spirit of Mercantile Adventure in the Merchants at Bushire, will always rise or fall, in proportion to the Stability or Instability of the Government at Sherauze". Commercial conditions in Zand territories were inauspicious. The port of Bandar Rīg had been abandoned. Khārg no longer had any commercial significance, but because of inland trade movements with Baṣra and elsewhere, and a local government which encouraged trade, the inland city of Shūshtar had attracted considerable interest in its key position where routes from the Iranian plateau entered the southern plains of Khūzistān, facilitating access to Mesopotamia and Syria.

Shūshtar thus provided an example, in the generally gloomy scene observed in 1790, of Iran's capacity never to justify total pessimism; and of the survival of an East–West overland and local trade depending on animals rather than ships, and on inland entrepôts rather than on offshore islands in piratical seas, or on ports on insecure shores. In effect, Shūshtar showed increased prosperity at a time when East India Company and private European maritime trading in the Gulf, with Bushire and Baṣra in decline as seaports, showed the opposite. Harford Jones and Manesty were not blind to what might be termed Iran's "old

inland trade". They noted how the size and variety of the kingdom occasioned "considerable inland commerce, as the different Provinces naturally stand in need, of the productions of each other". Their analysis of various regions' products and natural wealth turned their attention inland. The British had the alternatives of total withdrawal or of adopting new methods of penetration. Jones and Manesty advocated the latter, with a peripatetic Resident based on Bushire but leaving a deputy there while he travelled and resided where he thought fit. Much more information about the country was needed and direct contacts with its merchants seemed desirable. The specie shortage might be surmounted by recourse to barter deals, and a proposal put forward in 1787 was repeated, that British goods, woollens, glass, hardware, not to mention Axminster and Wilton carpets, might profitably be offered in exchange for medicinal drugs needed by hospitals in India.[68]

In spite of depressing trading conditions, the East India Company stations at Baṣra and Bushire retained a degree of viability. Baṣra was a key stage in overland despatches going to and from India and England, and, should something unforeseen occur at Baṣra, then Bushire would be ready for use. As hostilities with France approached, this became increasingly a consideration. Both stations were posts for collecting information. Hope continued that conditions within Iran would stabilize to produce a more favourable trading climate. Trade was the paramount British interest in 18th-century Iran: few British people lived or travelled in the country who were not engaged in it. Trade would continue to be a preoccupation, but not a main function of that new phase of Britain's and British India's relationship with Iran, which opened with the new century. It was political and strategic imperatives, beginning to take shape towards the end of the 18th century, which were to endure through the 19th century and into the 20th.

[68] Report on Commerce, 1790. See also Report of Capt. Malcolm on the state of trade between Persia & India and suggestions as to the means for improving it, Bushire, 26 February 1800. Saldanha, *Selections*. For a manuscript copy of Malcolm's report see IOR, G/20/22.

CHAPTER 11

IRANIAN RELATIONS WITH GREAT BRITAIN AND BRITISH INDIA, 1798–1921

The European power geographically closest to Iran was Russia. Peter the Great had brought the two countries into conflict as a result of his ambitions in the Caspian and the Caucasus regions, thereby threatening Iran's northwestern provinces. Extended into Central Asia these Russian ambitions set a pattern which lasted long beyond the 18th century, although Peter's death in 1725 and Nādir Shāh's campaigns temporarily halted Russia's advance. In the distracted decades later in the century Iran's position in the Caucasus grew steadily weaker, and when it attempted to re-establish relationships as they had existed under the Safavids, Georgia sought the protection of Catherine the Great.

In 1795 the urge to recover one of the Safavid kingdom's richest provinces prompted Āghā Muḥammad Khān's march into Georgia. Catherine responded by sending a Russian expedition (1796) under Count Valerian Zubov, and the Qājār Shah was again on his way to Georgia when he was murdered in 1797. The problem of the northwest frontier and Iran's relations with Russia were among the most difficult his nephew and successor, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, had to face. To obtain help in this problem was the main objective of Iranian statecraft in the complicated negotiations conducted throughout the Napoleonic period, but neither France nor Britain could provide the kind of support Iran needed.

Britain's diplomatic and strategic interest in Iran arose initially not from the perception of a Russian, but a French threat. In 1796, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the East India Company, Stephen Lushington, was in correspondence with Henry Dundas, President of the Board of Control, regarding the French menace to India through Egypt. An alliance with Iran was a possible countermeasure. The terms envisaged resembled those which had been suggested by Major John Morrison earlier and which he now again urged on Dundas. Morrison, a former East India Company army officer, had been for some years in the service of the Mughul *pādshāh*, Shāh ʿĀlam. He had visited Shīrāz in 1787 and saw in Jaʿfar Khān Zand a possible useful ally. For thirty-six years Morrison had pressed on various Ministers proposals for such an alliance. His visit to Shīrāz had prompted his appeal to the authorities in London for powers to make a treaty with Jaʿfar Khān. His arrangement envisaged making

officers available, with arms and supplies, for the Zand army in exchange for commercial privileges and rights. He too had been attracted by the "wool of Carmania which is superior to that of Spain and would alone make a considerable article of commerce", but his efforts bore little fruit. Dundas understood Iran's strategic significance, but refused to take any action. A power-centre no longer existed in south Iran, and he was anxious not to antagonize Russia in view of the general hostilities with France.[1]

Late in 1795, two French botanists with an interpreter appeared in Iran. These naturalists were empowered by the Republic of France to undertake political negotiations, and in an exchange of views with Āghā Muḥammad Shāh they had encouraged him to attack his Ottoman neighbours and to send 12,000 horsemen to the assistance of Tipu Sultan in India. They also sought permission to open a factory at Bandar ʿAbbās. The Shah, however, refused all their requests.[2] These and other French activities in Iran and the Gulf, especially at Muscat, made the British extremely apprehensive. In July 1798, the Court of Directors appointed Harford Jones "Resident at the Court of the Pacha of Bagdad" to counter the intrigues of the French. Shortly thereafter, the Company's talented and versatile Iranian employee, Mahdī ʿAlī Khān, was appointed Resident at Bushire. He was to go first to Muscat to report on French activities there, and then to Bushire, to take charge of the factory. He was to make recommendations for stopping the spread of French influence in Iran, but "the great object of your appointment is the extension of the Company's European imports into Persia, and the improvement to the highest possible degree of their selling price". Thus it was hoped to revive the trade at Bushire and make it once more commercially rewarding.[3]

After Karīm Khān's death the fragmentation of Iran had spread to the Gulf, where the ruler of Muscat had emerged as the most important power, militarily

[1] "Major John Morrison: Ambassador for the Great Mogul", *Bengal Past and Present* (1931). "The Melville Papers: Letters from Major John Morrison relative to Bengal and Persia", *Journal of the Central Asian Society* (1930). John Morrison to Lord Hawkesbury, 31 July, 2 and 16 August, 9 September, 8 November 1788. British Library Add Mss 38,223, Liverpool papers. Philips, pp. 101–2. Edward Ingram has written several articles on this period, see bibliography. See also his books *The Beginning of the Great Game in Asia 1828–1834*, and *Commitment to Empire*. Martin, *Despatches* I. Mornington to Dundas, 5 February 1799. See also correspondence in IOR, L/P&S/20 and G/29/21.

[2] Translation of a Paper of Intelligence given in Latin by a Roman Catholic Missionary at Isfahan, 23 October 1800. "Some hitherto unpublished despatches of Sir John Malcolm.", *Journal of the Central Asian Society* XVI (1929), 486ff. G.A. Olivier, *Voyage dans l'Empire Othoman*. Harford Jones to James Willis, Bagdad, 27 March 1799. Kentchurch Court MSS, 9211.

[3] Brydges, *An Account of the Transactions of His Majesty's Mission* II, pp. 16–17. Instructions to Mirza Mehedy Ali Khan as Resident at Bushire, 3 September 1798. Governor of Bombay to Earl of Mornington, 29 October 1798. Saldanha, *Selections*. See also Sir Denis Wright, *The Persians amongst the English*, ch. 2.

as well as commercially. He controlled most of the islands and much of the Iranian shore. As farmer of the port of Gombroon he could, if so inclined, grant rights there again to the Dutch and the French, with whom Muscat had a longstanding relationship. Mahdī ʿAlī Khān received profuse assurances of friendship from the ruler, a promise to expel the French, and permission to establish a factory in Muscat – an idea which he did not pursue, since there seemed an established tradition that a factory for one meant a factory for all.[4] He then proceeded to Bushire. The threatened combination of the French with Tipu Sultan of Mysore and also with Zamān Shāh of Afghanistan, had intensified British interest in Iran. One idea was to ask the Russians to persuade the Iranians to harass Zamān Shāh. Lord Grenville, the British Foreign Secretary, opposed this. Lord Wellesley (then the Earl of Mornington) frequently referred in his correspondence to Zamān Shāh, who had advanced to Lahore in 1796 and threatened to do so again. The despatches reveal how little was known about the regions beyond the Indus at that time. Lord Wellesley sent Mahdī ʿAlī Khān into Iran to persuade "Baba Khan [Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh] or whatever person may be in exercise of the sovereignty of Persia" to distract Zamān Shāh. To accomplish this, military supplies could be provided, but Wellesley confessed:

> I am not possessed of sufficient information respecting the state of Persia, or the views of the ruling powers in that country, to enable me at present to furnish Mehdi Ali Khan with any specific instructions or powers for the attainment of the object in contemplation.[5]

Mahdī ʿAlī Khān, by his own account, "raised such a flame, & Commotion in the Country of Zamaun Shah, that to extinguish & overcome the same will not be an easy matter for the stars themselves".[6] Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh had, in fact, for reasons of his own, sent an advance force of cavalry against Herat, to be joined by larger forces later, but the Bombay authorities in their alarm at Zamān Shāh's approach to India, seen in the context of European dangers, took satisfaction in Mahdī ʿAlī Khān's "marked success" and wrongly attributed to his measures "the sole or principal means of obliging Zaman Shah to return from his Indian Expedition".[7]

Harford Jones at Baghdad strongly disapproved of Mahdī ʿAlī Khān's mission. To set the Iranians against the Afghans was like setting a bull to attack a

[4] Translation of a letter from Mehedy Ali Khan, 7 October 1798. Saldanha, *Selections*.

[5] Martin, *Despatches* I, p. 286. See also Mornington to Duncan, 8 and 24 October 1798; Mornington to Dundas, 29 February and 6 July 1798; Mornington to Kirkpatrick, 8 July 1798; Minute of Governor-General in the Secret Department, 12 August 1798, I, pp. 26–8, 89, 94–107, 165–8, 189, 306–8.

[6] Letter from Mehdy Ali Khan, 10 January 1799. IOR, G/29/21.

[7] Extract from Political Letters from Bombay, 13 June and 14 December 1799. IOR, G/29/21.

lion. Or, as he put it in another way, the "arrow launched" against Zamān Shāh would "irritate but not wound". He deplored touching off a Shīʿī–Sunnī war. Sending a mission to Kabul seemed a better way to deal with Zamān Shāh.[8] Jonathan Duncan, the Governor of Bombay, told Jones that he would reverse the Bull and Lion metaphor, that he had made overtures to Kabul and had received no response, and that Jones's letters would be forwarded to London since in the coming decisions all points of view were needed.[9] Thus, in these early diplomatic moves, there emerged one of the most perplexing and continuous problems in the formulation of British policy: which of the two to support and rely upon, Iran or Afghanistan?

Mahdī ʿAlī Khān claimed to have created as a diversion the expedition sent by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh towards Herat. According to one of Mahdī ʿAlī Khān's reports, the Iranians came to within about a day's distance of Zamān Shāh before turning back.[10] Thus Zamān Shāh was not crushed, although as a consequence of internal dissensions within his kingdom he would shortly be deposed and blinded (1800). In 1799, however, the British in India were still agitated by the Afghan threat. Moreover, the French had invaded Egypt, and the Russians were in Georgia. Both were intriguing in Iran. Lord Wellesley determined to send another "more important and dignified" mission to Tehran.[11] Captain John Malcolm, selected to lead this mission, explained how he perceived his objectives:

> To relieve India from the annual alarm of Zemaun Shah's invasion, which is always attended with serious expenses to the Company, by occasioning a diversion upon his Persian provinces; to counteract the possible attempts of those villanous but active democrats the French; to restore to some part of its former prosperity a trade which has been in great degree lost.[12]

In Baghdad, Jones felt that the Tehran mission should have been given to him, and he was also worried that Malcolm's splendid embassy would arouse jealousy at Constantinople; an Anglo-Turkish mission to Kabul which he had suggested would, it seemed, be rendered superfluous.[13]

Malcolm followed much the same route as Mahdī ʿAlī Khān. He attached

[8] Harford Jones to Jonathan Duncan, Bagdad, 16 September 1799; see also extract of letter from Jones to Secret Committee, 28 September 1799. IOR, G/29/21. Harford Jones to James Willis, Bagdad, 16 May and 8 September 1799, Kentchurch Court MSS, 9211–2.

[9] Jonathan Duncan to Harford Jones, 20 November 1799. IOR, G/29/21.

[10] Mehdi Ali Khan to John Malcolm, May 1800. IOR, G/29/22.

[11] Jonathan Duncan to Harford Jones, 20 November 1799. IOR, G/29/21.

[12] Kaye, *Life and Correspondence of Sir John Malcolm* I, p. 90.

[13] Harford Jones to James Willis, Bagdad, 2 December 1799, 15 January and 18 April 1800. Kentchurch Court MSS, 9212.

great weight to strengthening the connection with the ruler of Muscat, the only Arab ruler able to give effective aid to a European enemy attempting an attack on India by way of the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf, and entered into an agreement with him before visiting the islands of Hurmuz, Qishm, Hinjām, and Khārg, on his way to Bushire. There, he wrote his report on the trading prospects of the Persian Gulf. This had much in common with that of Manesty and Jones ten years before and with the more recent report of Maister and Fawcett at Bombay.[14] All cited the prolonged disturbances in Iran as the main reason for the decline of trade. All stressed the alluring commercial potential of Iran. Malcolm saw grounds for optimism in the attitude of the Qājār rulers towards commerce, but his report differed from earlier ones in its emphasis on political matters.

An attack upon India by way of the Red Sea or the Persian Gulf might, he supposed, in the future come from Syria and Aleppo by the Euphrates and through Baghdad, or from the direction of the Caspian. The latter would, of course, involve the "great Northern Power". To guard against such future danger he recommended gaining a firm footing in Iran and the Gulf. Bushire seemed the most advantageous place for a settlement on the mainland. Malcolm's report also described and compared various islands in the Gulf. Qishm seemed to meet British needs, and Malcolm subsequently discussed with Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh its possible cession to the British. However, he dropped the idea when it became clear that this issue involved other parties in the Gulf.[15]

While at Bushire and during his progress to Tehran, Malcolm collected as much information as he could about Iran. In an early assessment, he described Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, as:

> universally represented as a Monarch of a humane disposition and a lover of Justice but he is said to be more bent on sensual gratifications and magnificant ease, than on the great and ambitious projects which constantly haunted the active mind of his Predecessor Aga Mahummud from whom, however, he inherits the vice of avarice.

[14] Report of Mr Maister, Customs Master, Bombay, and Mr Fawcett, Accountant General, Bombay, on the state of trade between India and Persia, and suggestions as to the means for improving it. Bombay Castle, 17 December 1799. Saldanha, *Selections*.

[15] John Malcolm to Earl of Mornington, Bushire, 26 February 1800 contains manuscript of this trade report. IOR, G/20/22. Confidental memorandum by J.G.L. dated 18 October 1933 on status of Basidu. For the status of Qishm, see also terms of re-lease by the Shah to the ruler of Muscat in 1855 and 1868 of Bandar Abbas and its dependencies, the Anglo-Persian treaty of 1857, and the telegraph agreement with Muscat in 1864. IOR, L/P&S/18 B428. See also relevant correspondence in FO371/17893, 18901, and 424/214, R. Hughes Thomas (ed.) *Arabian Gulf Intelligence* (Cambridge, 1985) and Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, esp. pp. 168–9, 184–5.

His chief minister, Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Iʿtimād al-Daula, he thought to be one of the best statesmen Iran had ever had.[16] Jones's somewhat different assessment of Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm was probably nearer the mark. His betrayal of Luṭf ʿAlī Khān had shown him to be a man "without honor or principle", but his conduct as minister at the Court of Tehran revealed his "ability and resource".[17] Malcolm's long description of the Iranian army concluded that Georgia was irretrievably lost. The Iranian soldier was extraordinarily brave, the unequal contest with Russia would not cease, but there could be only one outcome: the Iranian army was no match for European organization and discipline. Given Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's character, Malcolm doubted whether he would persevere long in his contest with Zamān Shāh. As Malcolm described Khurāsān, it "properly speaking stretches from Candahar to Yezd east and west and from near Kirman to the sea of Arriel". It was further divided into three parts of which Zamān Shāh ruled one part, from Qandahar to Herat. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh would, Malcolm thought, advance on Khurāsān. Pride alone demanded that he do something. In any case Iran would keep up the alarm for at least another year and thus occupy Zamān Shāh at a critical time.[18]

Malcolm reached Tehran in November 1800. Early in 1801 he concluded commercial and political treaties with Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh. The commercial treaty allowed the British to settle in any Iranian seaport or city. Several other provisions encouraged trade. By the political treaty the Shah undertook to "lay waste and desolate the Afghan dominions", should an attempt be made to invade India. Should an Irano-Afghan war break out, Britain would supply arms to Iran. Other provisions committed Britain to help the Iranians in any war with the French, and, on their side, the Iranians would prevent the French from establishing themselves on any islands or on the coast. Malcolm had found his negotiations in Tehran difficult. As he put it:

> This Government has ever considered the English . . . as Traders and Merchants that benefited by a Commerce with Persia, and as such has often granted them *Firmauns* of Protection and Privilege but never thought for a moment of entering into any regular alliance with them . . . it is almost impossible to explain to them the nature of the Honorable Company's Government and of the delegated Powers vested in the Governor

[16] Malcolm to Earl of Mornington, Bushire, 22 April 1800. "Abridged Memoir . . . complied from a careful comparison of several original Persian Documents". IOR, G/29/22.

[17] Harford Jones to Malcolm, Bagdad, 7 May 1800, Kentchurch Court MSS, 9212.

[18] "Abridged Memoir of the Khajar Family", Bushire, 18 April 1800; See also 22 April 1800; Malcolm to Marquis Wellesley, Camp near Bushire, 5 and 6 May 1800; Mehdi Ali Khan to Malcolm, May 1800. IOR, G/29/22.

General in a manner to satisfy them of the latter's competency to treat immediately and on a footing with an independent Sovereign.

Malcolm tried to counteract this by attention to form and precedence, and by the lavish distribution of gifts.[19]

By the time these treaties were concluded, the threat from both Afghanistan and France had receded. Consequently, British interest in Iran waned. None the less, there were people such as Jones who thought that a permanent mission ought to be maintained at Tehran. He also thought himself uniquely qualified to fill the post. He strongly advised that the appointment of a minister to Tehran be made "from home".[20] In 1802, Britain and France concluded the Treaty of Amiens, which lasted only into 1803. The Shah made unsuccessful attempts to obtain British help in his renewed struggle with Russia in the Caucasus, and, failing, drew closer to Napoleon. The resulting French missions of 1805–6 were sufficiently alarming to stir the Government of India to ratify Malcolm's treaties of 1801 in 1806.[21]

Meanwhile, however, the Russian invasion of Georgia in 1803 had prompted Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh to take the initiative in renewing ties with France. This overture and Talleyrand's correspondence with Jean Rousseau, consul-general at Baghdad in 1803–4, stimulated Napoleon's interest. The missions of Alexandre Romieu and Amédée Jaubert to Tehran in 1805 were the result. Napoleon wrote two letters to Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, in February and March 1805, in which he recalled the military exploits of Nādir Shāh and Āghā Muḥammad Khān, pointed out the dangers to Iran from Russia and from British India, and called for a close alliance with France. Romieu reached Tehran in October 1805. He was only able to deliver Napoleon's letter to the Shah and to send home one report before he died. His assistant, Georges Outrey, brought back to France the news that the Shah intended to send an ambassador to Paris – a decision of great significance. Jaubert, meanwhile, had been imprisoned for months at Bayazit on the way and

[19] Malcolm to Marquis Wellesley, Humadaun, 20 February 1801. FO60/1; Same to same, Calcutta, 31 July 1801. IOR, G/29/22. The distribution of gifts was an accepted custom used by Harford Jones, Mahdi ʿAlī Khān, the French, and anyone else endeavouring to do business, diplomatic or commercial, in Persia. See Wright, *The English Amongst the Persians*, ch. 3.

[20] Harford Jones to James Willis, Bagdad, 28 January, 12 March, 21 October, 22 November and 14 December 1801. Kentchurch Court MSS, 9212.

[21] Kelly, *Britain and the Persian Gulf*, ch. 2. There is extensive correspondence on Malcolm's mission in the Foreign Office Records at the Public Record Office as well as in India Office Records. The Minto papers in the National Library of Scotland are essential for this period. Malcolm's mission is frequently criticised for its extravagance, but see Brydges, *Kajar Dynasty*, p. 114. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties* XIII, pp. 45–53. See also Kaye, *Life of Malcolm* I, pp. 138–47, 516–25.

did not arrive in Tehran until June 1806. Though in poor physical condition, he was able to present Napoleon's second letter to the Shah, who suggested that a French ambassador be sent to Tehran, and offered to give support to France against the British in India. The Shah, fearing that two successive French envoys might die on his soil, speeded Jaubert's departure. The court physician attended him as far as Turkey. The Shah's ambassador went with him to meet the Emperor at Finkenstein in April 1807. An alliance was signed there in May. General Claude Mathieu Gardane's subsequent mission brought Iran, although only briefly, into Napoleon's grand designs.[22]

Lord Wellesley had been recalled as Governor-General of India in 1805 as a direct consequence of his expansionist policies. In the instructions given to his successor, Lord Cornwallis, the latter was committed to retrenchment and to the reversal of Wellesley's principles, withdrawing from all connections and alliances outside India. The dispute about how and where to defend India was to continue throughout the 19th century. More immediately, this reversal of policy led to the initial success of the French in Iran in 1807. Two documents, the Treaty of Finkenstein and Gardane's instructions, illustrate the scope and seriousness of Napoleon's ambitions.

By the Treaty of Finkenstein, France acknowledged the territorial integrity of Iran and her historic claims to Georgia; promised to make every effort to obtain the Russian evacuation of that province, and to bring about a peace between Iran and Russia; and meanwhile, to assist the Iranian army with weapons and military advisers. Iran, in return, undertook to declare war on Great Britain; to expel British citizens from Iranian territory; to work with the Afghans and the Marathas to attack the British possessions in India; and, should Napoleon embark upon the invasion of India, to give the French army passage across the country.

In his long and precise instructions to Gardane, Napoleon stressed that Iran was important to France as being a natural enemy of Russia, and as a "moyen de passage" for the invasion of India.[23] He emphasized the need for detailed geographical information and for an analysis of Iran's military potentialities.

[22] Puryear, *Napoleon and the Dardanelles*, pp. 44–5, 56–8, 87–8, 155–7. Bonaparte, Empereur des Français à Feth Ali, Chah des Persans, 16 February and 30 March 1805; Napoléon to Talleyrand, 7 April 1805. *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier* Publiée par ordre de L'Empereur Napoléon III (Paris, 1862–4), x, pp. 184–6, 342–4, 362–3. *Mission du Général Gardane en Perse sous le Premier Empire* (Paris, 1865), pp. 16–29, 71–80. Savory, "British and French Diplomacy in Persia, 1800–10", p. 32.

[23] Gardane, pp. 27–9: Text of treaty pp. 71-80. *Correspondance* xv, pp. 261–6: Quotation from p. 262. See also Napoléon to Talleyrand 12 April 1807; Napoléon au Schah de Perse, 20 April and 5 May 1807; pp. 73–6, 148–9, 237–8.

Gardane was a man of high calibre and great resourcefulness, with a family connection with Iran. He was accompanied by an impressive contingent of military and civilian assistants, but his instructions became irrelevant as a result of events in Europe. When Napoleon reached his accommodation with Tsar Alexander at Tilsit, two months after Finkenstein, no provision was made for the return of Georgia to the Shah. This need not have meant the end of Napoleon's interest in Iran. The combination of France, Russia and Iran against British India would have proved formidable. But the rising against Napoleon in Spain extinguished any possibility for close co-operation between France and Iran for the achievement of their very different objectives.[24] The events in Spain and Portugal, Lord Minto (Governor-General in India, 1807–13) wrote in 1809, "appear to insure this country [India] from any European attack at least for a considerable period if not for ever".[25] Gardane's position in Iran became untenable. When the commander of the Russian forces in the Caucasus, General Gudovich, besieged Erivan, headquarters of a vassal khan of the Shah, Gardane was unable to give the Iranians any assistance.

In the spring of 1808 French designs in the East had been for the British in India "the important subject which now engages so deeply all our thoughts and attention".[26] Lord Minto, from the time he became Governor-General in June 1807, had taken an immediate interest in the regions beyond India. French diplomacy, particularly in Iran, worried him. It was seeking, he thought, "with great diligence, the means of extending its intrigues to the Durbars of Hindoostan". Napoleon had long looked towards India and had "pushed as usual his diplomacy in front of his military operations". Added to this was the precariousness of British rule: "We must not forget the nature of our tenure on this Empire, and that it would not require a great European army to disturb our security in India." With so much at stake, steps needed to be taken to guard against a "remote but possible danger".[27]

Gardane's arrival in Iran brought a new urgency to the problem of Indian defence. The "leading principle" of Minto's "most secret thoughts" on the subject was that "we ought to meet the expected contest in Persia or the adjacent countries". He authorized another mission, Malcolm's second, to go from India

[24] Gardane, pp. 95–9, 103. Puryear, *Dardanelles*, pp. 168, 214–15, 263–4, 316, 349–52, 368–9. Brydges, *Kajar Dynasty*, pp. 332–49, 373–9. Watson, *History*, pp. 158–60.

[25] Minto to General Hewitt, Fort William, 17 January 1809, 11,283, Papers of the First Earl of Minto, National Library of Scotland.

[26] Minto to Duncan, Fort William, 10 March 1808. Minto MSS, 11,284, NLS.

[27] Minto to Col. Close, Calcutta, 11 October 1807. Minto to Dundas, Secret, 1 November 1807. Minto MSS, 11,283, NLS.

to Tehran. Simultaneously, the authorities in London had appointed Sir Harford Jones as their envoy to Iran. Jones had, in January 1807, written a memorandum arguing that although Iran had been won over to France by promises of relief from Russian pressure, France had, in fact, neither by mediation nor by arms, furnished that relief. Jones recommended that England appoint an envoy to go to Saint Petersburg to discuss a possible settlement, and to proceed from there to Georgia for further negotiations. "If he succeeds in accommodating matters between Russia and Persia the Task of attaching Persia exclusively to the Interests of England will be an easy one."[28]

Jones was given authority to sign a treaty with the Shah in His Majesty's name, "but any promise of pecuniary or military assistance was to be made only in reference to the Forces actually in India, and to the Funds of the East India Company: by whom also the expenses attending the Mission are to be defrayed".[29] The Malcolm and Jones missions became involved in prolonged and bitter squabbles. Minto explained his conduct as follows:

> When I first determined to depute Col. Malcolm to Persia, all that was known of Sir Harford Jones, was his departure from England, to Petersburgh on his way to Persia about the time that I sailed for India: we did not afterwards learn whether he had accomplished the object of his journey to Petersburgh, whether he was to proceed from thence, to Persia, or whether, in that event, it was possible to find his way through so many hostile Countries. Everything that related to his mission was uncertain, and especially the time of his arrival at his destination. It was in these circumstances and after Genl. Gardanne [*sic*] had actually reached the Persian Court, and the French ascendancy there was every day advancing, that I thought it impossible to leave the British Interests in that important quarter totally unprovided for any longer, and directed Col. Malcolm to proceed thither without a moment's delay.[30]

Minto's decision in fact formed part of a larger frontier policy. Napoleon was not alone in appreciating the value of accurate topographical data. Charles Metcalfe received instructions to travel to the Punjab; Mountstuart Elphinstone was sent to Afghanistan. As Minto put it to Dundas: "We have not till of late had much inducement to frequent, or make much enquiry concerning the countries beyond the Indus";[31] but the advance of knowledge of regions hitherto little known and the spread of this information in Europe became one of the striking features of the Napoleonic years. When Malcolm was setting out on his third

[28] Minto to Duncan, Fort William, 10 March 1808; see also Minto to J.W. Roberts, 6 February 1808 and to Sir Edward Pellew, 9 March 1808. Minto MSS, 11,284, NLS.

[29] George Canning to Harford Jones, no. 1, 28 May 1807. FO60/1.

[30] Minto to the Chairman of the East India Company, Fort William, 21 May 1808. Minto MSS, 11,283, NLS.

[31] Minto to Dundas, Fort William, Secret, 10 February 1808. Minto MSS, 11,283, NLS.

mission in 1809, his second having proved abortive, he met Captain Charles Christie and Lt Henry Pottinger at Bombay. They had just returned from Sind. Under Malcolm's auspices, they undertook another journey and explored routes through Sīstān and Herat into southern and central Iran. Pottinger's account of this expedition, together with Elphinstone's *Account of the Kingdom of Caubul*, and Malcolm's *History of Persia*, provided their contemporaries with first-hand information about these areas and their inhabitants. Like the books of James Morier, Harford Jones and others, their works sold well. Malcolm paid tribute to the work of his contemporaries in advancing knowledge of the geography of Iran, especially of the routes between "the territories of that Kingdom and India". Much had been known before "regarding the usual road to India by Meshed, Candahar, Cabul & Lahore, but... previous to the journies of the late Captain Grant, Lieutenant Christie and Ensign Pottinger", little was known "of the practicability or otherwise of an Army penetrating to India by the routes of Seistan, Balochistan or Mekran". Now "future measures of defence" could be grounded on fresh information about "the nature of the Countries and their inhabitants".[32]

Minto was right in attributing Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's refusal to receive Malcolm's mission of the summer of 1808, and his reception of Harford Jones early in 1809, to the degree of influence Gardane still retained. In his last uncomfortable months in Iran Gardane felt the falseness of his position acutely. But he resolutely made it a condition of his continued residence there that a British mission should not enter the country. The Shah had still enough faith in the French to refuse Malcolm, but not enough to refuse Harford Jones. When Jones arrived, Gardane left, as he had said he would, although this ran counter to what was expected of him in France.

When Harford Jones arrived in Tehran in February 1809 he found the Shah seriously menaced by the Russians. In just over a month he concluded a new treaty. By its terms, Iran cancelled other treaties with European powers, and agreed to oppose any European force attempting to pass through Iranian territory to India. Britain undertook to give financial and military assistance, should a European power attack Iran, mediating initially if Britain was at peace with that Power, but thereafter rendering Iran military aid if such mediation failed. In case of war between Iran and Afghanistan, Britain would not intervene unless both parties requested mediation. Lord Minto had to accept the treaty, with a reluctance all the greater because of his sensitivity regarding the Govern-

[32] Malcolm to Minto, Baghdad, 6 October 1810. Minto MSS, 11,718, NLS.

ment of India's authority, and because Jones's activities in Tehran ran directly counter to Minto's own frontier policy. After the news of events in Spain and Portugal, he regarded as visionary the idea of any French menace to India. He thereupon lost interest in involvement beyond India's northwestern frontiers, and abandoned the idea of expeditions to the Persian Gulf, including any question of occupying Khārg.[33]

In the summer of 1809 Minto had again sent Malcolm to Iran. In 1810, for some months, Tehran witnessed unseemly wrangling between the two envoys, which was settled by the appointment of a fresh envoy, Sir Gore Ouseley, whose powers superseded the others. His instructions referred to "some misunderstandings between the Governor General of India and Your Predecessor Sir Harford Jones" regarding the latter's relationship to the former (his mission had been funded by the East India Company), and this time it was made clear that, while he was strictly enjoined to attend to the Company's interests, Sir Gore's "appointments shall be defrayed by our Royal Treasury and that you shall only receive our Instructions and Directions through the Channel of our Secretary of State of the Foreign Department and that you shall only be responsible to us for your conduct and behaviour during your Embassy".[34]

Ouseley converted Jones's Preliminary Treaty of 1809 into what was to become the Definitive Treaty of 1812. It committed the Shah to obstruct any European force attempting to reach India across Iran. In return, the British promised military aid and a subsidy should any European power invade that country. Events in Europe, however, overtook this treaty when, in 1812, Napoleon invaded Russia, and Britain made agreements with Sweden and Russia. Consequently when hostilities were renewed between Russia and Iran, despite the 1812 treaty Britain failed to provide direct help to Iran. Nevertheless, some of the British officers of the 1809 contingent, sent to replace the French in Iran, fought alongside the Iranians, and Ouseley played a mediating rôle in the Russo-Iranian armistice of 1813, but was only able to prevent harsh terms from being harsher.[35] Iran was compelled to accept substantial territorial cessions, including Georgia, and had to grant rights to Russia on the Caspian. A lull in what had been bitter fighting then ensued until 1826.

With the end of the Napoleonic era several trends became clear. First, politics had replaced commerce as the chief European concern in Iran. For Britain and

[33] See, for example, Minto to Sir Gore Ouseley, Calcutta, 5 December 1813. Minto MSS, 11,288, NLS. [34] FO60/4 and 9.

[35] Aitchison, XIII, pp. 56–9. For a translation of the text of the Treaty of Gulistān, 1813, see Aitchison, XIII, pp. xv–xviii, no. 5. See also Muriel Atkins, *Russia and Iran 1780–1828*.

France alike, policy in the East turned upon alignments in Europe. As Minto put it to Malcolm in 1809: "The Policy in Persia *must* follow the events in Europe",[36] a point by no means evident to the Shah, who had tried to achieve his aims first by a British and then by a French alliance. Success had eluded him because Iran was not of the first order of importance to his European allies. The priority Europeans attached to European interests and the facts of geography made this inevitable.

Russia, by contrast with Britain and France, had pursued a consistent policy which geography helped rather than hindered, and which gathered momentum from territorial gains. For British India, on the other hand, the Afghan threat and the French menace had proved only a transitory diversion. The contrast between Russia's perennial and Britain's fluctuating preoccupation with Iran was not lost on observers such as Manesty, Malcolm, and Jones. In the early part of the century they had called attention to the Russian danger, which became better understood after British officers had served as advisers to the Iranians. By 1810, when Malcolm dubbed Russia one of the "chief obstacles to our success in Persia",[37] he was only stating what had become common knowledge. The threat was not only of Russia's outright territorial ambitions at Iran's expense, but also of the impact on India of an Iran subservient to Russia.

Fruitful co-operation between nations generally requires common interests. During the 19th century Russian pressure might have provided Britain, British India and Iran with grounds for common action, but the Napoleonic years had revealed how shifting these grounds could be. They had demonstrated that Britain and Iran had frequently changing priorities. In their struggle with Napoleon the British followed whatever course forwarded their cause, sacrificing any which did not. At the same time, Iran, threatened on her northern border by Russia, had to find help wherever she could. If, in the end, neither the British nor the French could provide effective aid, Iranian statesmen had to settle for the best accommodation they could make with Russia, an alternative from which they derived little benefit.

It was in the Napoleonic era that regular diplomatic relations began between Britain and Iran. The Shah responded to Malcolm's first mission by sending an envoy to India who was accidentally killed in a riot in Bombay in 1802, an episode which caused profound anxiety in India. Both Mahdī ʿAlī Khān and Malcolm were called upon to smooth things over with the Persians. Finally, in

[36] 27 June 1809. Minto MSS, 11,286, NLS.

[37] To Minto, 6 October 1810. Minto MSS, 11,718, NLS. See also Malcolm to the Earl of Elgin, Camp on the Banks of the Tigris, 13 March 1801. IOR, G/29/22.

1804, Manesty delivered a letter apologising to the Shah at his camp at Sulṭānīya.[38] The Shah's second representative arrived in India inopportunely in 1805, the year Romieu arrived, in October, in Tehran and Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's flirtation with Napoleon began in earnest.

Jones's mission initiated more formal diplomatic exchanges. On conclusion of his treaty, Jones was confirmed as minister to Iran and the Shah's envoy to George III was received in England in November 1809. He was found to be conversant with the strategic significance which the British attached to Herat, knowledge which Ouseley thought had been gleaned from the French.[39] George Forster's description of Herat in 1783 had called attention to its strategic location.[40] Herat was of vital concern to 19th century British policy-makers. It caused wars with both Iran and Afghanistan. Early in the 20th century, however, views changed. In 1904, Sir George Clarke expressed the conviction that if Russia attempted to rehabilitate her prestige by a strike against Herat: "We must keep our heads quite cool and imprison the idiots who will say that Herat is the 'key of India'."[41]

When the Iranian envoy left for England, James Morier accompanied him with the treaty negotiated by Jones. In 1811, both returned to Tehran with Ouseley to make those adjustments which turned Jones's preliminary treaty into the definitive treaty of March 1812. This was subjected to further revisions until, in a form agreed to in 1814, the Treaty of Tehran became the basis for relations between Iran and Britain until the Anglo-Iranian war of 1856. The Shah, in exchange for a subsidy, agreed to resist any encroachment upon his country by European armies hostile to Britain, and to use his influence with the rulers who controlled "Karezan, Taturistan, Bokhara, Samarkand, or other routes", to stop any invasion aimed at India through these territories. Articles four and six, providing for aid to Iran "in case of any European nation invading Persia", caused trouble later. Malcolm's commercial treaty of 1801 was not reaffirmed. Not until 1841, in spite of frequent efforts, was a commercial treaty at last concluded. It provided for "most favoured nation" treatment and allowed the British to have consulates at Tabrīz and Tehran.[42]

It will have already become evident that Britain's former exclusively commercial concern with Iran had yielded to new political and strategic considerations. At the same time the different and sometimes conflicting policy goals and

[38] Wright, *Persians amongst the English*, ch. 3; Ingram, "From Trade to Empire in the Near East" pt. II, p. 10ff. [39] FO60/2. [40] Forster, *Journey from Bengal to England*.

[41] To Lord Sanderson, 2 August 1904. Balfour MSS, 49,700, Brit. Lib.

[42] Aitchison, XIII, pp. 56–63.

assessments in London and Calcutta remained an issue throughout the period. Twice control passed to India, from 1822 to 1836 and again for about a year in 1859–60,[43] and India bore a large share of the cost even when the Foreign Office exercised control. In 1871 investigations disclosed that for the past thirty-eight years the total expenditure on the mission had amounted to £510,000, of which India had paid £450,000. In 1879 the India Office secured a reduction of the annual charge from £12,000 to £10,000, but the issue continued to be a bone of contention well into the 20th century.[44]

Another feature of Anglo-Iranian relations in the earlier decades of the 19th century was the fluctuation in the degree of British interest in Iran and willingness to be consistently concerned. For example, it was felt after Napoleon's defeat that there was less need for an active policy. British efforts to mediate with Russia on Iran's behalf had proved disappointing. In 1815, Henry Ellis believed that they "did not in the least mitigate the calamities of Persia, but that on the contrary . . . accelerated the signature of a Treaty by which all the countries then in the possession of the Russian Troops, were formally ceded by the Shah".[45] The prevailing view in India was that any Russian threat should be met nearer India, perhaps at the river Indus, which meant that little attempt was made to cultivate relations, learn more about, or build upon the alliances with the states to the north and west, of which Iran was then the most important. In September 1815, Henry Willock was appointed chargé d'affaires in Tehran. One of several British officers serving in the East India Company's army who went with Sir Harford Jones to Persia in 1808 to train Iranian troops, he had seen action in 1812 against the Russians at Ṭālish and in 1814 had commanded Iranian forces in an expedition into Kurdistān. Nevertheless, his appointment was a deliberate move to lower the standing of the mission. When Ouseley left Tehran his instructions to Morier had pointed to reduced involvement, especially in the training which British officers were giving to the Iranian army.[46]

Willock left Tehran hurriedly when threatened with decapitation because the arrears of subsidy promised to Iran in 1818 had not been paid by the Govern-

[43] Yapp, "Control of the Persian Mission, 1822–36".

[44] Foreign Office/Treasury correspondence, 16 October and 6/8 November 1888. FO60/498. Memorandum on Indian contributions for China Establishments, East Indian Squadron, and Persian Mission, 26 March 1890. FO60/517. Note on British Mission at Teheran by O.T. Burne, Confidential, 25 February 1887; Memorandum on the Persian Mission Charges by E.M., 25 March 1890. IOR, C55. See also Persian Expenditure: The "Half and Half" arrangement. 20 and 21 June 1916. HWG. IOR, L/P&S/18/C161.

[45] Memorandum by Henry Ellis, London, 28 March 1815. FO60/10.

[46] Gore Ouseley to James Morier, Kara Kelisseh, 20 June 1814. FO60/9.

ment of India in 1822.[47] This opened up again the question of what kind of mission there should be in Tehran. George Canning, in a Foreign Office memorandum, recalled that the "hopelessness" of attempting to ameliorate peace terms imposed by Russia upon the Shah had forced the withdrawal of the British ambassador, and the relegation of the mission to a look-out post to watch the intrigues and encroachments of Russia. No attempt to counteract them was authorized. He believed that as it was India's view that a good understanding with Iran was important, it seemed logical that "an Asiatick mission to an Asiatick Court would, for objects essentially Asiatick, be more expedient than the maintenance of a Chargé d'Affaires from London in competition with a Russian Minister of higher Rank and Allowances". Thus, in spite of strenuous objections from the Shah and from British officials in Iran and in India, control of the British mission in Tehran was transferred from the Crown to the Company, from London to India.[48]

In 1826 the second Irano-Russian war began and continued into 1828, ending in the defeat of Iran. The subsequent Treaty of Turkmānchai deprived Iran of further territory in addition to that already lost, imposed upon it a large indemnity, and affirmed Russia's exclusive rights in the Caspian. Britain had not provided the support the Shah had expected, but British officers had taken part in the war and the British representative had tried to ease the peace terms. For Britain, the timing of the war was acutely embarrassing. Canning was involved in negotiations with Russia aimed to help the Greeks without breaking up the Ottoman Empire: even indirect involvement in hostilities against Russia in another theatre was unthinkable. Replying to Williams Wynn's analysis of British obligations, Canning not only maintained that no *casus foederis* existed, but that the Iranians had started the war. Russian encroachments had taken place, he agreed, but there had been no Russian attack on Iran. Malcolm and Ellis contended, not unreasonably, that Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh had been forced by internal pressures, especially from the religious zealots, to engage the Russian forces.[49]

[47] Memorandum, detailing the circumstances of the late disagreement between the Court of Persia & the British Chargé d'Affaires, Foreign Office, November 1822. FO60/21.

[48] George Canning to Williams Wynn (India Board), Foreign Office, Confidential, 19 December 1822. FO60/21.

[49] Draft memorandum on the letter of Governor General in Council of 25 March 1826. Foreign Office to Wynn, 6 October 1825. FO60/25. Wynn to Canning, Private, 8 October 1826; Canning to Wynn, Private and Confidential, Paris, 9 and 24 October 1826. Memorandum by Henry Ellis, 5 December 1826; Confidential notes by John Malcolm on the progress of Russia to the Eastward, 10 November 1826. FO60/29. For text of the Treaty of Turkmānchai, see Aitchison, XIII, pp. xxiii–xli. Papers relative to the war between Persia and Russia in 1826, 1827, 1828. IOR, L/P&S/18/A7.

After the peace of Turkmānchai in 1828, the Iranians felt the futility of resistance to Russia and suffered further humiliation by having to send an embassy to St. Petersburgh to apologize for the murder of the Russian envoy in Tehran. They were thoroughly disheartened by Britain's inability or unwillingness to help them, particularly in view of the British interpretation placed upon the treaty of 1814, by which Britain undertook to give aid if a European power attacked. As part of the price of peace, the Russian indemnity was some £3,500,000, which Iran could not afford. The British envoy, Colonel (later Sir) John Kinneir Macdonald, agreed to pay £250,000 in exchange for the abrogation of the entangling articles in the Treaty of Tehran of 1814. Thus Britain bought her way out of her obligations at a time when Iran was too helpless to protest. As Jones put it, Iran was "delivered, bound hand and foot, to the Court of St. Petersburgh".[50]

Prince Menshikov, visiting Tehran in 1826, had urged the Iranians to shift their war aims from the Caucasus to Khurāsān. This advice coincided with Iran's ambition to re-establish her frontiers as they had existed under the Safavids and Nādir Shāh, but a severe outbreak of cholera followed by famine postponed serious military operations. In June 1830, Sir John Macdonald died at Tehran. Within an hour, Major Isaac Hart, serving since Christie's death with the army of the heir-apparent, ʿAbbās Mīrzā, also died. Captain (later Sir John) Campbell did not have the standing of his predecessor at Tehran. Nor did the young officer who succeeded Hart have the latter's influence over military affairs. In 1831–2 ʿAbbās Mīrzā successfully subdued several of the autonomous tribal chiefs in Khurāsān and enlarged the area over which Iran exercised authority. The prize he aimed for was Herat. While British advice deterred him from moving against Khiva in 1831, and postponed his move on Herat in 1832, his son Muḥammad Mīrzā was leading an expedition against Herat when news of his father's death at Mashhad (25 October 1833) forced him to return.

In 1834 Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh died at Iṣfahān, aged eighty, in the thirty-seventh year of his reign. This raised the question of the succession. ʿAbbās Mīrzā's eldest son, Muḥammad Mīrzā, had been named as heir apparent on the death of his father the previous year. However, two of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's sons also coveted the throne. For thirty-eight days one contender, ʿAlī Shāh Ẓill al-Sulṭān, claimed Tehran, while the other, Ḥusain ʿAlī Farmān-Farmā, governor of Fārs, began the march north towards the capital. Sir John Campbell gave strong diplomatic support to Muḥammad Mīrzā. Palmerston had extensive exchanges with St.

[50] Kaye, *History of the War in Afghanistan* I, p. 151.

Petersburg. Britain also provided military and financial assistance, enabling Muḥammad Shāh to enter Tehran with an armed force led by Sir Henry Lindesay-Bethune, who later defeated Farmān-Farmā's army near Iṣfahān. A protracted succession struggle was thereby avoided. The new Shah owed much to British support, but this was not enough to ensure good relations. Muḥammad Shāh's ambition to recover the lands lost in the east was too strong. This ambition, especially over Herat, brought him into direct conflict with British interests.[51]

Canning had died in 1827. The disastrous course of the second Irano-Russian War and the terms of the Treaty of Turkmānchai shocked the British into a reconsideration of policy, while British observers on the spot repeatedly sent home forecasts of further Russian interference. In particular, the significance of Russian expansion east and southeast of the Caspian prompted dire warnings. From Astarābād to Mashhad it was only a twelve-day journey through country well-supplied with forage and water. Caravans going from Mashhad to Herat had a choice of two routes, taking fifteen days each through easily-traversed territory. Russian missions had gone to Khiva and to Bukhārā. Willock wanted to send John McNeill to Khurāsān to gather information about the region from Astarābād to the Indian borderlands. In his opinion, the extension of Russian influence posed a more formidable threat to India than had the French in 1807, "to counteract which we took such vigorous precautions".[52] Henry Ellis also pressed for doing more in Iran. While Britain's relations with Iran were a secondary interest in terms of European politics, they were of primary importance in Asia.[53]

Two tangible measures now indicated a stronger British line. In 1833, a regular British detachment reinforced those British officers still serving in Iran. Later, Sir Henry Lindesay-Bethune joined them with special instructions from Palmerston and with an officer and eight NCOs under his command, who were to develop a rifle corps, for which arms and ammunition were provided. Bethune also had authority to engage a director and artisans for the establishment of a cannon foundry. The British government met these expenses partly out of the secret service vote.[54] Palmerston encouraged further exploration of routes and territories.[55]

[51] Abstract of papers relating to the succession to the Throne of Persia. IOR, L/P&S/8/C1.

[52] Henry Willock to Lord Amherst, Tehran, no. 1, 23 December/7 January 1824/5. FO60/25.

[53] Memorandum on the state of affairs in Persia, 19 December 1826. FO60/30.

[54] Minute by Palmerston on letter to Sir H. Bethune respecting arms and military stores. FO60/35. Palmerston to Bethune, Foreign Office, 12 March 1836. FO60/44.

[55] Palmerston to Lt. Allen, Foreign Office, 31 March 1836. FO60/44. Memoranda on Persian Affairs by John McNeill, 9 October and 22 December 1835. FO60/38.

In 1835, it was decided to transfer the Iranian mission back to the control of the Foreign Office, although the new minister to Tehran received his credentials both from the King and the Governor-General in India.[56] Harford Jones had long advocated this change. He observed that Iran had been flattered when her friendship had been considered valuable, but neglected when circumstances changed. He considered that both Britain's position in Iran and Iran's own political position had changed for the worse since 1811. Improvement required Iran to be paid the "proper compliment of a Minister directly accredited & directly proceeding from the Throne of England to the Throne of Tehran". His recommendation regarding the language to be used in conversation with Russian representatives was repeated in the instructions to British representatives appointed to Iran in later years, for example the instructions to Wolff in 1888:

> The Integrity and Independence of the present dominions of Persia is a matter of such consequence, that no attempt to violate them can be tamely permitted – we therefore feel ourselves called on to afford Persia all means of increasing her internal Strength . . .[57]

Sir John Campbell had also tried to persuade the government to improve its relations with Iran. He was alarmed by Russia's increasing strength, Iran's weakness, and the decline of British influence.[58] Henry Ellis recommended a special embassy to Tehran to initiate the change in the Iranian mission and negotiate new political and commercial treaties.[59] Instructions were drawn up for the special ambassador, who would congratulate the new ruler, Muḥammad Shāh, on his accession (1834). King William IV minuted: "Appd. But The King is of Opinion that the Commercial Arrangements should be pressed. H.M. is decidedly convinced that the East India Company *ought* to pay the Expence of Maintaining the British Officers and Non Commissioned Officers in the Empire of Persia." Palmerston opposed an ostentatious embassy to Tehran, but sent Ellis out on a special mission in advance of the new minister, Sir John McNeill.[60]

Ellis reported pessimistically. The Shah would persevere over Herat. Russia was encouraging him and promising assistance.[61] Pessimism was not diminished by the reports of James Baillie Fraser who described the Shah's *vazīr* (Ḥājjī

[56] Foreign Office to McNeill, no. 9, 2 June 1836. FO60/42. Viscount Palmerston to John Backhouse, 22 June 1835. Broughton MSS, 46,915. Brit. Lib.

[57] Memoranda on Persian affairs, Boultibrooke, 22 September 1834 and 30 November 1835. Kentchurch Court MSS, 9764 and 9774.

[58] John Campbell to Secret Committee (East India House), Tehran, no. 117, 18 November 1833. FO60/35.

[59] Memorandum on affairs of Persia, May 1834. FO60/35.

[60] Foreign Office to Henry Ellis, no. 3, 25 July 1835. FO60/36.

[61] Numerous memoranda by Ellis in FO60/40 and 41.

ʿAbbās-i Erivani, also known as Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī) as "shrewd, cunning, unprincipled", and undoubtedly "in Russian pay". The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mīrzā Masʿūd, described as clever, was also "a Pensioner of Russia".[62]

In spite of Palmerston's interest in repairing, if possible, Anglo-Iranian relations, he was beginning to look to Afghanistan instead of Iran as the main bulwark for the defence of India. In 1832 Willock had warned in a memorandum that Russian probing east of the Caspian Sea must reduce Iran's effectiveness as a barrier to Russia's advance towards India. Once he accepted this assessment of the situation, Palmerston was bound to recognize that the best ground on which to defend India from invasion was territory in closer proximity to British India. As a result, the focus of British interest naturally moved eastwards from Iran to Afghanistan.

In the summer of 1837 the Shah advanced against Herat. The siege of the city, in which the British officer, Eldred Pottinger, played a notable part in its defence, began in November. A year later, British-Indian forces moved into Afghanistan, and in 1839 the Russians marched against Khiva. None of these three enterprises was to meet with success. The Russian expedition was almost totally annihilated, severe cold forcing the remnant to turn back while still far from Khiva. The British invasion of Afghanistan ended in the disastrous retreat of 1842. The Shah, in his advance on Herat, had been actively encouraged by the Russians and trusted to their promises of money and material support. But he found that their assistance did not materialize in sufficient quantity in his hour of need. After several months of investment, Herat still held out and the besiegers were suffering badly. Then, in order to reduce the pressure on the besieged, British military and naval contingents occupied Khārg in June 1838. In September, the Shah abandoned the siege and returned to Tehran.

The forceful British response to the Shah's move against Herat resulted from Palmerston's conviction that an advance by the Iranians into Afghanistan would mean the establishment of the Russians there too, and this would pose a threat to India. Already in May 1838, Palmerston had ensured that the Shah should be informed that Iran's move into Afghanistan was seen as a hostile act which terminated Anglo-Iranian friendly relations. Palmerston also wished the Shah to be discouraged from any military activity, including subduing Türkmen tribes, on Iran's northeastern borders and in the neighbourhood of Afghanistan. For Palmerston intended to rely on an Afghan State, or if necessary two, one centred on Kabul and Qandahar, the other on Herat, that as an Indian protectorate, a

[62] Memorandum by James B. Fraser on the late accounts from Persia & the expediency of losing no time in occupying a commanding position in Affghanistan, 15 June 1836. FO60/44.

"regular outwork of India", would for the future constitute British India's main barrier against Russia. Afghanistan might, therefore, be reckoned British India's answer to Russia's Persia, Afghanistan being drawn into British India's orbital influence, as the Russians were attempting to attract Iran into theirs. This line of thinking, however, was quickly overtaken by the course of events, for the British disaster at Kabul and its repercussions, and the change of government at Westminster, meant the abandonment of what would later come to be known as "forward" policies. As for the aftermath of the Herat affair, by January 1839 Palmerston had come to realize that the Shah's retreat from Herat stemmed less from British demands than from internal difficulties. The Shah would renew his attempt to take the city when he could, and meanwhile would use intrigue and diplomacy, as opportunity allowed. Not until October 1841 were the issues between Great Britain and Iran smoothed over, and diplomatic relations resumed. The British occupation of Khārg continued until March 1842. Then, in spite of pressure from India to retain it, British forces on the island were withdrawn as part of a general settlement with the Shah's government. Only a coal-depot remained thereafter, supervised by a British officer, but that too was evacuated in 1844.

In 1842 the Russians occupied the island of Āshūrāda, near Astarābād, and erected buildings on it. In the years before the Crimean War (1854–6), Russian probing and penetration of the Caspian area had continued, but had met Iranian opposition, which had some British support. At the same time, Russia continued to encourage Iranian ambitions to the east.[63] After several threatening moves, the Iranians captured Herat in October 1856. War between Britain and Iran immediately followed. Relations had deteriorated earlier, during the Crimean War. A disagreeable affair involving the British minister, Charles Murray, added complications. Murray withdrew the mission from Tehran late in 1855.[64]

Britain did not declare war against Iran until Herat's capture. This Irano-British war of 1856–7 did not have full cabinet support in England, and was not viewed enthusiastically in India where many believed in the principles of "masterly inactivity", mindful of what had happened in Afghanistan. The British expeditionary force left India for the Gulf in November/December 1856,

[63] Memorandum on Encroachments of Russia on Eastern Coast of the Caspian, Foreign Office, 8 October 1846. Broadlands MSS. Francis Farrant to Viscount Palmerston, no. 3, Tehran, 18 January 1848 enclosing Consul General Abbott's report of 27 December 1847. FO60/136.

[64] In addition to official records in the Public Record Office and in the India Office Records, see also the Clarendon MSS in the Bodleian Library, Oxford; the Broadlands MSS temporarily held by the Historical Manuscripts Commission; and the Murray and Dalhousie MSS at the Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh. See also Wright, *English Amongst the Persians*, pp. 23–4.

established positions at Bushire and Khārg, and prepared for penetration inland. The British advanced up the river Kārūn as far as Ahvāz, and engaged the Iranian army at Khūshāb in February 1857, and at Muḥammara (Khurramshahr) in March, but peace terms were arranged before a sustained campaign into the interior took place. The terms were lenient. Britain neither sought territory nor asked for an indemnity. This to some extent reflected the opposition led by Gladstone, party divisions within England, and the distaste with which military adventures of any type, however successful, were then regarded. *The Times*, in a leading article entitled "Where Herat is, we neither know or care", mirrored the views of many people in England who were unfamiliar with the issues involved and saw no reason for war with Iran. Palmerston barely avoided a full scale debate in Parliament, which would have exposed the deep divisions within England and weakened Britain's negotiating position. He therefore quickly settled the essentials: Iran was to withdraw from Herat; Britain could appoint consuls at her discretion in Iran; and the slave-trade convention of 1851 was to be renewed.[65]

After the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, the India Act of 1858 transferred the powers formerly vested in the East India Company to the British Crown. From November 1858 until December 1859 the administration of the legation in Tehran was transferred from the Foreign Office to the India Office. Lord Stanley, as Secretary of State for India, in his search for a replacement for Murray, offered the Tehran post to Sir Henry Rawlinson, an authority on Iran, who argued that Persian and Afghan affairs, as they related to Indian defence, "must be organised *in* India and executed from India". He, contrary to the traditional view, believed that Herat under Persian control served British interests. The instructions drawn up for Rawlinson gave evidence of renewed interest in Iran and of a stronger policy in Central Asia.

On his arrival in Tehran, in 1859, Rawlinson received a grand welcome from Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, but hopes of an active and co-operative policy quickly faded, for on 8 January 1860 Rawlinson received the news that the Iranian mission was again being transferred to the Foreign Office. At the time of his departure from England he had left a letter of resignation which was to take effect immediately if such a change occurred. Rawlinson therefore left Tehran in May 1860, much to the Shah's displeasure. His successor, Charles Alison, remained in Tehran until he died in 1872. He came in for much obloquy, but it is perhaps a measure of the

[65] Palmerston to Clarendon, 17 February 1857; Charles Murray to Lord Clarendon, Bagdad, 28 April 1857. Clarendon MSS, C69 and 79, Bodleian Library, Oxford. For the text of the treaty see Aitchison, XIII, pp. 81–5.

importance Great Britain by that time attached to Iranian affairs that he was not replaced.[66]

In February 1858 Lord Derby formed his second cabinet, which lasted until June 1859, and stronger lines of policy were formulated for the Indian borderlands. Reports of the "ceaseless endeavours" of Russian agents to extend their influence through Central Asia seemed to call into question the policy of continued passivity. The activities of one of the Russian agents, N.V. Khanikov, were particularly alarming. In the autumn of 1858 Khanikov arrived at Herat with a large diplomatic suite. He spent money lavishly and undertook surveys into Sīstān. He asked Dost Muḥammad at Kabul to receive him there, but was refused; in Herat, however, he was an unqualified success. He promised a loan and negotiated a Russo-Herati treaty, to be approved by Iran during the forthcoming visit to Tehran of Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān, the ruler of Herat. The treaty provided for closer trade-relations and for a permanent Russian agency at Herat. The Russian minister at Tehran, Count Anichkov, courted Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān assiduously. Rawlinson too had several conversations with Sulṭān Aḥmad Khān while the latter was in Tehran, and persuaded him to reject the treaty, thereby apparently regaining lost ground for Britain. Sulṭan Aḥmad Khān professed friendship with Rawlinson and offered to submit the affairs of Herat to the Government of India for advice, adding that he would welcome a British agent at Herat.

In June 1859 a change of government in Britain ushered in a radically different policy. Sir Charles Wood succeeded Stanley in the India Office, with Thomas Baring (later Earl of Northbrook) as Under-Secretary. It was agreed that no agent would reside in Afghanistan: he might be murdered and thus bring on another Afghan war. Military expenditures were to be cut and activities in the Indian borderlands were to be curtailed. Arguments in favour of "masterly inactivity" again prevailed. Rawlinson was accordingly instructed that a British officer might visit but not remain at Herat. Sir Lewis Pelly went to Herat for three weeks in October 1860. He endeavoured to ascertain how the Heratis felt towards Iran and how much remained of the impact of Khanikov's diplomatic efforts. Pelly thought that the Iranian alliance would endure "only until better prospects should appear. Like most strict Afghan Sunnees, Sultan Ahmad Khan entertains in his heart a contemptuous hatred for the Persian Sheeah". More-

[66] George Rawlinson, pp. 205–37. Henry Rawlinson to Murray, 31 March, 28 May and 14 September 1860. Murray MSS, GD261/42. Scottish Record Office. For Rawlinson's resignation, the deplorable conduct of Alison, and Persian affairs see Russell MSS, PRO30/22/78 and 116. See also FO60/246. For transfer of the Persian mission to the India Office see Malmesbury to Stanley, Foreign Office, 12 November 1858. FO60/236.

over, the ruler's visit to Tehran had given him an insight into Iranian politics, so that he no longer counted on the Shah for "solid strength and permanent support".

Sīstān, like Herat, was claimed by both Iran and Afghanistan. Muḥammad Shāh had intended not only to recover Herat but also Sīstān as far as Ghazni. His son and successor, Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, pursued the same objectives. We have seen how his attempts against Herat failed and led to war with Great Britain, but he was more fortunate in the southeast. In the ten years following the Irano-British war the Shah advanced his frontiers south of Sīstān eastward through nearly five degrees of longitude. The frontier met the sea on the Makrān coast between Gwādar and Chāhbahār. It should, moreover, be remembered that from the death of Aḥmad Shāh Durrānī in 1773 the Iranians had gradually regained territory in Afghanistan which they had formerly possessed, so that in the 1860s the Afghans complained to the British in India about these encroachments. By article six of the treaty of 1857 Iran undertook not to resort to arms but to submit territorial disputes with Afghanistan to Britain for adjudication. Iran claimed sovereignty over all of Sīstān, arguing that *ab antiqua* it had formed part of her empire. Iran had also protested bitterly to Britain when Dost Muḥammad, the Barakzai ruler of Kabul, had incorporated Herat into his Amirate in 1863 after a siege which had lasted for ten months. The Foreign Secretary, Lord Russell, responded that Iran and Afghanistan should settle their frontier disputes between themselves, by force of arms if necessary.[67]

By the 1860s Britain's policy in Iran and also in respect of Afghanistan was being determined, not so much by those two countries' potential role as agents of Russia as by Russia's own presence, encroaching ever nearer to India as she expanded across Asia. In 1844, after the disastrous attempt against Khiva in 1839, Russia came to an agreement with Britain whereby she pledged to leave the Central Asian khanates "as a neutral zone between the two empires in order to preserve them from dangerous contact". This gave the khanates a respite, although in the late 1840s Russia built forts in the steppe south of Orenburg and on the Aral Sea. In the early 1850s two lines of advance began from Orenburg and Semipalatinsk, a process which was accelerated after the Crimean War. In

[67] The correspondence on this is voluminous. See, for example, L/P&S/18, A and C memoranda; Council of India memoranda, C141 and 142; L/P&S/9/3 and L/P&S/3/64. The appropriate Foreign Office volumes are full and rewarding. Khanikov who spent 27 years in Central Asia published some of his findings. His book was translated from the French as *Memoir on the Southern Part of Central Asia*. Khanikov's work was widely quoted. See, for example, Sir F.J. Goldsmid, *Eastern Persia* I, p. 11. See also Pelly to Canning, no. 16, Herat, 27 October 1860. FO800/233; for Sīstān, see IOR, C68 and 98.

1859–60, Russia penetrated Khokand. The taking of Chimkent in 1864 closed off the Kazakh steppe by a line of forts. In 1866 Tashkent and Khojand were annexed, and inroads against the Amirate of Bukhārā gained momentum. Russia's advance towards this last city prompted a comprehensive British review of the whole Central Asian question in 1868–9. Rawlinson's minute of 20 July 1868 elicited other evaluations, including a critical analysis by Lord Lawrence, who had become Governor-General of India in 1864 and was a powerful advocate of "masterly inactivity" on the northwest frontier. Rawlinson's recommendations included taking steps for reviving the strong British policy which had prevailed in Tehran in the early years of the 19th century. Supplying officers for the Iranian army had been part of this policy.

> The vast expenditure that we incurred in the days of Harford Jones and Malcolm, in expelling the French from Tehran, is no longer required. What is required is an indication of renewed interest in the country, and a disposition to protect it against Russian pressure. Our Officers should be again placed in positions of influence and power with the Persian troops, as in the days of Christie, of Lindsay, and of Hart. Presents of improved arms, and perhaps artillery, would testify to our awakened interest. The Persian nobles should be encouraged to send their sons for education to London, rather than to Paris. Investments of English capital in banks, in railways, in mining operations, and other commercial enterprises are freely proffered, and if supported by our authorities would create a further bond of union between the countries.

After British officers had been compelled to leave Iran in 1838 because of the Shah's move on Herat, officers of other nations – France, Austria, and Italy – had been tried. When Rawlinson had represented Great Britain at Tehran in 1860, the Shah had asked him for forty British officers and for £100,000 annually for their expenses. Rawlinson had supported this request, but had been overruled. However, the question of British officers for Iran frequently recurred and Rawlinson revived it again in 1868. Despite the objections of Lord Lawrence, who was Viceroy of India until 1869, to a vigorous policy in Iran, and specifically to the stationing of British officers there, the measure attracted substantial support, but it was temporarily buried in 1872 in interdepartmental correspondence.[68]

In 1868 the Shah had also proposed that the British furnish Iran with steam-driven warships to protect its commerce in the Gulf and to enforce his authority along the coast. The project collapsed when the Admiralty objected and the

[68] Memorandum by H.C. Rawlinson on the Central Asian Question, 20 July 1868. Notes on Sir H. Rawlinson's Memorandum by various authorities. IOR C5 and 6.

Government of India feared that such ships might be used to recover Baḥrain. British interests in the Persian Gulf, which included curtailing the slave trade and piracy, had led the British to make a series of treaties with the independent rulers around the coasts. These dated from 1819–20 and were revised and extended as needed throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. Great Britain's direct relations with Baḥrain went back to 1805, and although Iran had historic claims to the island, the British government rejected these claims nine times, beginning in 1822. It also rejected Turkish claims nineteen times, beginning in 1839. Nevertheless, the Secretary of State for India, the Duke of Argyll, described as "unreasonable" the traditional British policy of opposing the extension of Iranian authority in the Gulf, which, he supposed, would be better than "a lot of petty and barbarous tribes".[69]

When Lord Mayo became Governor-General of India in 1869 he changed the course of the Indian government's relations towards Afghanistan, Iran, and the Gulf. He thought that Central Asia was bound to fall to Russia one day but, unlike Argyll, he favoured missions by Douglas Forsyth and others into Central Asia in order to delay the inevitable. This meant increased activity in the borderlands. By then, Russia had conquered Samarqand (1868) and had forced Bukhārā into tributary status: a Russian road connected Tashkent and Samarqand, and Russian steamships carried on a lively traffic, especially on the Āmū-Daryā. Khokand's forces had been defeated. An advance against Khiva had been delayed only because the financial departments refused the funds. In the great row between the rouble and the sword the latter prevailed despite Count Shuvalov's special mission in January 1873 to London to assure the British: "Not only is it far from the intention of the Emperor to take possession of Khiva, but positive orders have been prepared to prevent it". Khiva capitulated in June 1873, as Lord Mayo had anticipated two years earlier. Central Asia in his time was certainly "inflammable", and the end of Russian expansion was not yet in sight. Lord Mayo thought that Chārjūy would go, and so would Marv, although the latter would prove costly. Marv in Russian hands would directly threaten India.[70]

[69] Memorandum by E. Hertslet, 23 March 1874, on the separate claims of Turkey and Iran to sovereignty over the island of Bahrain. FO251/57. See also FO371/18901 and 424/214. Argyll to Mayo, 16 July 1869. Mayo Papers. Add. 7490. Cambridge U. Library.

[70] See Central Asian files in the Mayo papers and his correspondence with Argyll, Buchanan, Burne, Disraeli, Durand and Rawlinson. Mayo Papers. Add. 7490. Cambridge U. Library. In the PRO see Russian Advances in Asia, 1865,6,7,8,9, 1873. WO33/15, 17A, 18, 19, 20, 25. See also IOL, Home Correspondence, P&S, vols. 55, 56, 57 and 60.

Annexation of Khiva brought Russia into contact with the Türkmens. After 1873 Russia began to advance against the various Türkmen tribes east of the Caspian, and this had serious implications for Iran. Established as a Caspian power in the first half of the 19th century, Russia now consolidated and expanded her territory in that region. In 1869 Krasnovodsk had been taken for the purpose of opening a route to Khiva and Turkistan. In 1872 Russian forces invaded Akhal and followed this by an attack on the Yamūt Türkmens across the River Atrak in 1873. These actions and other reconnaissance probes raised the question of the extent of Iranian authority in the northeast.

Alarmed by this Russian drive, a group of Iranians came to believe that the country faced grave danger and that its salvation demanded thoroughgoing reform and closer association with Great Britain. These Iranians included Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān Mushīr al-Daula (1828–81); Mīrzā Malkum Khān (1833–1908); and Mīrzā ʿAlī Aṣghar Khān Amīn al-Sulṭān (1854–1907). They endeavoured to turn the European threat into a source of strength. Their efforts for basic changes in the structure and methods of government were accompanied by enthusiasm for western institutions like banks, roads, and railways.[71] The construction of a network of telegraph lines in the 1860s vitally affected Iran, both in bringing about closer contact with Europe and in strengthening the authority of the central government within the country itself. But above all, the railway symbolized the West. In July 1872 the Iranian government granted the famous Reuter concession.

Earlier, the Indo-European Telegraph Company, a British concern, had obtained a concession for the construction of a line from Khānaqīn through Tehran, Iṣfahān, and Shīrāz, to connect at Bushire with the Persian Gulf submarine-cable, which joined the Turkish and Indian telegraph lines. The Reuter concession, likewise a British concern, was much more far-reaching, including extensive rights over Iran's natural resources as well as the right to build a railway from the Gulf to the Caspian and any branch lines considered practicable. It represented an attempt by Iranian reformers to involve Europeans directly in the country's internal development on a massive scale. Arguing that if Great Britain had a stake in the country she would protect it, Mushīr al-Daula, then vazīr, had persuaded Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh to take this step. The Persian minister in London later explained the motives to Lord Tenterden.

[71] For a study, using Persian sources, of the interaction of Iranian reformers and western innovations see Shaul Bakhash, *Iran, Monarchy, Bureaucracy and Reform under the Qajars: 1858–1896* (Oxford, 1978). See also A.K.S. Lambton, "Persia: The Breakdown of Society", *Cambridge History of Islam* I, ch. 6.

When the Reuter Concession was granted it was owing to the influence of the Grand Vizier & himself who saw it in a way of saving Persia from the overwhelming influence of Russia. They supposed that by giving these great advantages to a British Subject they were rescuing them from the grasp of Russia. They had believed that the English Foreign Office wd. be ready to support and protect this scheme; but they had found themselves mistaken. Where they looked for sympathy they had only met with coldness & indifference. On the other hand from the very first Russia had striven her utmost to break the Concession and to get it transferred to Russian hands.[72]

The reform party also thought that a visit to Europe by the Shah would have a good effect both in impressing Nāṣir al-Dīn with western accomplishments and in persuading Europeans of Iran's seriousness about reform. The Shah, in the course of his first European tour in 1873 (to be repeated in 1878 and 1889), found the Russians angered by the Reuter concession, which was also criticized in England because of its sweeping provisions. He cancelled the concession soon after his return home. For many years Baron Julius de Reuter negotiated for compensation, which was finally arranged by his son in 1889. The first spectacular attempt to bind Iran and Britain closer had failed.

After the capitulation of Khiva (1873), the Shah, in an autograph letter in August 1874, asked for moral and material support from Great Britain, and help in preventing Russia from acquiring the district of Marv. The Iranian minister in London, Malkum Khān, argued that without British guidance and assistance Iran must be lost. In Tehran, Ronald Thomson recommended that British officers be sent to Iran to reorganize the army. The long minutes written by the Viceroy's Council show that the policy of "masterly inactivity" still prevailed in India, even though the importance of Iran to India in the new circumstances created by Russia's changed position in Central Asia was recognized.[73]

In the 1870s both Iran and Afghanistan figured more prominently in British calculations. Lord Mayo's reception of Shīr ʿAlī at Ambala in 1869 was a recognition of the Amir's success in having put the pieces of his kingdom together again. It also signalled a departure from the policy of "masterly inactivity", and made both Lord Lawrence and the Russians nervous. There were two problems. The Amir wanted a territorial guarantee, although his northern territories were ill-defined and the Russians were already making inroads. Secondly, a year had hardly gone by before he was again facing serious

[72] Memorandum by Tenterden on Baron Reuter and Persia, 9 November 1874. FO60/406. Both Rawlinson and Curzon criticised the concession.

[73] Government of India to Lord Salisbury, no. 123 of 1875, 7 June 1875. FO60/377. Minute by Salisbury of 6 October 1874 on question of providing British officers for the Persian army. IOR, Home Correspondence, Secret Department, vol. 81.

disaffection at home. Lord Mayo could do little to help. Shīr ʿAlī would certainly not retain any degree of popular support if he turned for assistance to the British. Although Lord Mayo could not provide all that Shīr ʿAlī wanted, he took great satisfaction from a renewed association with the Amir. Lord Mayo's efforts were cut short early in 1871, however, when a Pathan convict assassinated him, while he was inspecting the Port Blair penal colony. His replacement, Lord Northbrook, followed the Lawrence tradition of frontier policy.[74]

The turning-point in British relations with Afghanistan came in 1873. Shīr ʿAlī was displeased with the British arbitration decision over Sīstān which, he thought, favoured Iran. He sorely resented Britain's refusal to recognize his favourite son, ʿAbd-Allāh Jān, as his heir. Finally, he was offended because the Viceroy would not give him a direct promise of aid against Russia. All this made him receptive to overtures by General K.P. von Kaufmann, Governor-General of Turkistan (1867–82), who had carried on a correspondence with Shīr ʿAlī for nearly ten years, directly contrary to Russian undertakings.[75] These exchanges came to fruition in the Russo-Afghan treaty of 1879 and the reception of a Russian mission at Kabul. Shīr ʿAlī refused to give permission for a British agent to reside at Herat and, later, would not receive a British mission at Kabul. British forces again entered Afghanistan in November 1878.

As suggested above, the outcome of the Sīstān arbitration had figured largely in the Amir's dissatisfaction with the British. Shīr ʿAlī had appealed to the Government of India for assistance in forcing Iran's withdrawal from the territories occupied during his years of troubles. The Shah's government maintained that all Sīstān had always been a part of Iran. In 1870 both rulers agreed to British arbitration and Major-General Sir Frederic Goldsmid, who had recently surveyed the Makrān coast for a telegraph line, as well as the Iranian frontier with Khalāt, was sent out to investigate the situation. His award of 1872 gave Sīstān to Iran, but not the lands on the right bank of the Helmand.

Sīstān's importance to Britain increased as Russia continued to advance across Central Asia and as Afghanistan seemed to become a less reliable barrier for India's defence. Charles Christie had crossed Sīstān in 1810 on his way to Herat, but it was not until the second half of the 19th century that British concern became serious about the ease with which a hostile force might use Sīstān as a base from which to threaten India through one of the more accessible

[74] See Mayo's letters and reports on his meetings with the Amir and his correspondence with Argyll, Mayo Papers. Add. 7490. Cambridge U. Library.

[75] Memorandum on the Correspondence between General Von Kaufmann and the Ameers Shere Ali and Yakub Khan of Kabul. From March 1870 to February 1879. IOR, L/P&S/18/ A38.

of the western passes, the Bolan. When Lord Salisbury became Secretary of State for India in 1874, one of his reasons for urging the Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, to have an agent at Herat or Qandahar, or both, was the lack of reliable information about Afghanistan and Iran. By 1879, Lord Salisbury (now Foreign Secretary) had evolved a policy which emphasized Iran instead of Afghanistan as the main outwork of Indian defence, since existing circumstances in Afghanistan seemed to preclude that country being either strong or friendly towards Great Britain in the foreseeable future. The terms, to which Lord Salisbury obtained the Cabinet's and the Government of India's consent, provided that Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh would acquire Herat and more of Sīstān, and receive a subsidy. The Shah would allow British officers to be resident in Herat, would not object to a railway from Qandahar to Herat, would resist Russian encroachments, would co-operate in improving transportation from the Gulf inland, and would undertake measures for internal reform.[76] In India, Sir Alfred Lyall told Lord Roberts: "Herat affairs are drawing swiftly to a crisis. I think the place will go to her western neighbour, and will be lost to Afghanistan henceforward."[77]

Lord Beaconsfield's summary to Queen Victoria has interesting insights into the government's thinking at an early stage in the negotiations.

Lord Lytton would like to fall back on the Treaty of Gundamak, but feels that is impossible: he, therefore, contemplates a group of quasi-independent chieftains under the influence and protection of the Imperial Crown of India, but combining this, for some time, with adequate military occupation of the Country by Yr. Majesty's forces. If this were effected, & Candahar, for example, in possession of Yr. Majesty's army, & in two years time connected by a rail-way with Herat, Ld. Lytton would not be unwilling to see the Shah of Persia, Lord of Herat on the same terms as the chiefs of Candahar, Caubul, Ghusnee, etc. Such arrangements cannot be made off hand.

Lord Salisbury, on the other hand, tho not disapproving of this general policy, wishes to close with Persia at once, for the fear, that Russia will forestall us. [. . .]

Lord Salisbury proposes, in his contemplated Convention, many engagements on the part of Persia, wh. wd. practically make the Shah Yr. Majesty's feudatory: not as Shah of Persia, but as Shah of Herat, as in the case of the King of the Netherlands, who is a feudatory, it is believed, as G.-Duke of Luxembourg.

Your Majesty justly enquires what guarantees have we, that the Shah will observe these conditions – The same guarantees that made him observe the treaty of Paris for thirty years, &, in addition, the increased guarantee arising from his increased proximity to Yr. Majesty's Empire, & its military resources, while the Persian Gulf is at all times, open to Yr. Majesty's fleet.[78]

[76] See correspondence in FO60/419 and FO65/1098.

[77] Sir Alfred Lyall to Lord Roberts, 27 November 1879. Roberts MSS, National Army Museum.

[78] 5 December 1879. CAB 41/13/16.

Lord Salisbury's negotiations were well advanced when the Shah suspended them in 1880. This action was widely attributed to Russian pressure. The substance of the proposals had been published by a Saint Petersburg correspondent. Writing some years later, Salisbury recalled:

> As regards the negotiations for the occupation of Herat by Persia a reference to the correspondence which took place over the subject in 1880 will sufficiently show that it was not to the action of Her Majesty's Government that the failure of the negotiations was due. It was the Persian Government who suddenly changed their attitude for some unexplained reason, which there was every reason to attribute to secret communication with Russia.[79]

Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's attempts to revive the discussions about the agreement came after the Liberals had returned to power, and met with a cold response. The opportunity for a close relationship with Britain of the kind envisaged in Lord Salisbury's scheme of 1879 never returned. Russian pressure intensified and under agreements made in 1881 the Shah relinquished claims to considerable territory in adjusting his Khurāsān boundary with Russia. Unaware of these concessions, the Government of India in 1882 agreed to grant a subsidy of five lakhs of rupees a year for a limited period to enable the Shah to reinforce his authority in the area south of Marv between Baba Dormuz and Sarakhs, but neither this nor Foreign Office efforts could be effective since Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh had already acquiesced in Russia's continued advance eastwards from the Caspian.

A Türkmen victory over the Russians in 1879 at Geök-Teppe brought about a decision at the highest levels in the Russian government to crush them. Revolts might otherwise break out throughout Central Asia. General Skobelev, who took charge of the campaign, slaughtered the Türkmens at Geök-Teppe in 1881. Russia annexed the Akhal Türkmen country in May. The submission of Marv followed in 1884.

This led to a strong reaction in British India. First, the decision to extend the railway to Quetta was taken. Secondly, there was renewed interest in Iran. Finally, there was undertaken the joint delineation by the British and Russian governments of Afghanistan's northwestern boundary. But while the Liberal government in England saw the danger in Russian advances which had turned Afghanistan's flank, it seemed more preoccupied with ensuring that the frontier policies of Lord Roberts did not prevail.[80] Both Russian and British authorities

[79] Salisbury to Sir Robert Morier, private, 10 May 1891. Salisbury MSS. Christ Church, Oxford.

[80] For general background see Burne's memorandum on Persia, 1879, and memorandum by A.W. Moore in IOR, L/P&S/8/C41, 46 and 54. FO65/990, 991, 1150, 1151, 1202, 1205, 1209, 1238. Minute by Viceroy, 4 September 1878, Military report on the Trans-Caspian Railway, FO65/1033. Kimberley to Ripon, 8 August 1884, Kimberley MSS.

agreed that the former's advances from the Caspian had grave implications for British India. The construction of the Trans-Caspian railway in the 1880s reinforced Russia's position. It ran close to Iran's northeastern border for almost three hundred miles. Numerous Russian proposals projected lines into Iran, to Mashhad and to the Gulf.[81]

By 1885 British reports from Iran described, and Mīrzā Malkum Khān confirmed, a discouraging trend of internal misgovernment and growing Russian influence. The latter was reinforced by the Panjdeh incident of March 1885, when the provocative Russian annexation of the Panjdeh oasis north of Herat very nearly led to war between Russia and Britain; but the latter gave way and the demarcation of Afghanistan's northern frontier proceeded.[82] The Shah asked for a territorial guarantee. What he got was advice about improving his administration and the routes between the Gulf and Tehran; but the British minister in Tehran recommended going further and giving some limited assurance to the Shah. An understanding, connected with earlier succession questions and dating from 1834, already existed between Russia and Great Britain pledging the two countries to maintain the "integrity and independence of Persia", and it had been reaffirmed in 1838, and in later years.

In 1865, however, Great Britain had failed to obtain from Russia agreement "to respect the independence of the Persian Monarchy, to abstain from encroachments upon the territory of Persia, and to act in such a manner as might best support and strengthen the Sovereignty of the Shah".[83] In 1879 Malkum Khān (the Shah's representative in London from 1872 to 1887) asked Lord Salisbury if the Iranian government could count upon the moral support of Great Britain if Russia attacked the northern provinces. Salisbury replied in terms of "moral support" and strong protests, but said it would be misleading to suggest that the Iranian government could "count on material assistance from us; the distance of the scene of operations would make that exceedingly difficult". Malkum Khān seemed to deprecate the idea of his expecting "material assistance",[84] but Britain's refusal and apparent inability to commit itself to such assistance constituted one of the basic obstacles to effective Anglo-Iranian co-

[81] Case 866, Affairs in Turkestan, compiled by Col. Belyransky . . ., 23 November 1884. IOR, Home Correspondence, P&S, vol. 87.

[82] See Sir Percy Sykes, *A History of Afghanistan* II, p. 163 and Louis Dupree, *Afghanistan*, pp. 421–2. See also Dufferin to Kimberley, Private, 5 April 1885, Kimberley MSS, for one aspect of the British decision not to go to war.

[83] Memorandum respecting . . . the Understanding between Great Britain and Russia as to the Maintenance of the Independence and Integrity of Persia. 22 April 1874. FO251/57. Correspondence relating to Persia and Affghanistan. [171] HL. 26 March, HC. 27 March 1839. See also *British and Foreign State Papers* XXV.

[84] Salisbury to R. Thomson, tel no. 26, 28 November 1879. FO60/410.

operation. The Shah naturally wanted a firm territorial guarantee, but until a railway or at least good roads connected the Persian Gulf ports with the northern provinces Britain could provide no effective aid against Russian pressure in the north. In 1888, when the Tsar visited the Caucasus, the Shah had been particularly overawed by his northern neighbour's military might, and the British minister in Tehran suggested that the appearance of one or two ships in the Gulf might serve as a counterpoise to displays of Russian strength. Lord Salisbury, however, ridiculed the idea: "For the purpose of influencing the destinies of Khorassan we might as well cruise in the White Sea as in the Persian Gulf."[85]

In consequence, the possibility of the involvement of other powers in Iranian affairs was canvassed, notably in 1885 by both Thomson in Tehran and Lord Randolph Churchill at the India Office. Approaches to Bismarck were aimed at securing his good offices as mediator in the crisis with Russia over the Afghan dispute which had developed in connection with the Panjdeh incident of March 1885, and to associate Germany with Great Britain in Iran's commercial development. On the former, more explosive issue, Germany said "the water is too hot for us to put our finger in". The second and more specifically Iranian issue stemmed from suggestions put forward by Baron Julius de Reuter. He still hoped for ways to operate at least part of his concession and proposed to form an international company, with the support of Bismarck and Lord Rothschild, to build a railway and attract capital for other enterprises in Iran. In discussions at the Foreign Office questions were raised about whether capital would be available for Iran unless Germany and Great Britain gave some kind of territorial guarantee. Lord Salisbury encouraged association with Germany and said that Great Britain would go as far as Germany did, but Bismarck expressed himself "unwilling to side for or against England or Russia on points where their interests were opposed".[86]

In office from 1886 to 1892, Lord Salisbury endeavoured to reassert in a more modest form the principles he had developed for Iran in 1879. The mainspring of his policy was that Iran, no less than Afghanistan, formed an essential outwork for India, and the implementation of that policy was to be through reform in a land which in the 1890s was no shining example of progressive achievement in government, administration, or technological advance. Not that Salisbury considered the fundamental British position changed. As he explained

[85] Minute by Salisbury on Wolff's telegram no. 158, 2 September 1888. FO60/495.
[86] Greaves, *Persia and the Defence of India*, ch. 6 and appendix 2.

in a private letter to Lascelles, "What we have to do in Persia may be summed up in two sentences: we have to make Persia as strong as we can by internal development to resist the supposed aggression: and we have to obtain for ourselves the amount and kind of influence which will enable us when the crisis comes to turn the efforts of Persia into the right direction."[87]

The problem was, how could Great Britain help Iran? For more than twenty years the Shah, Malkum Khān and others had been asking for advice and aid. Advice was worthless unaccompanied by aid. In forbidding promises of material aid, Salisbury insisted: "we are really powerless till there is railway communication with the Coast".[88]

A more energetic British policy was signalled in 1888 by the appointment, as British Minister to Tehran, of Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, who was considered to have "great talent in Oriental diplomacy".[89] Wolff's tour in Tehran was not lacking in the devising of schemes. His observations on the internal state of the country convinced him that Iran needed to improve the general living conditions of her people as much as the country needed to build roads and establish banks. In this he was in agreement with many other observers, one of whom reported in 1886 on what he saw as successive corruption and decay as well as the violence of lawlessness and a lack of security inimical to development of resources, while "Rulers and Mollahs" opposed outside influence and techniques because these would cause their "downfall". Others gave a more hopeful picture. General Robert Murdoch Smith, who had a long acquaintance with the country, wrote in 1887:

> When we began our Telegraph work in 1863 the prospects were most gloomy. Our unfortunate war with Persia was still fresh in the minds of all. We were looked upon with distrust and suspicion, & we lived in a constant state of friction. In the course of 24 years intercourse all this has happily changed. We are regarded as friends and benefactors [. . .]
>
> This I think shows us how to proceed if we wish to consolidate & extend our influence. Let us open up communications from the Gulf where as yet we have it all our own way. A railway from Mohammerah or Ahwaz, better still because cheaper, into the

[87] Salisbury to Sir Frank Lascelles, private, 6 October 1891. Salisbury MSS. Christ Church, Oxford. I have drawn on my book and articles for the period down to 1914, see bibliography. See also David McLean *Britain and her Buffer State, The collapse of the Persian empire, 1890–1914* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1979).

[88] Minute of 4 May by Salisbury on Currie's memorandum concerning his conversation with Malkom Khan, 3 May 1888. FO60/497. Salisbury to Sir Henry Wolff, tel. no. 21, 23 May 1888; same to same, private, 25 May 1888. FO60/494.

[89] For Wolff's instructions see FO60/491. Reproduced in Greaves, *op. cit.*, appendix 4. For Wolff's appointment see Salisbury to Cross, private, 22 August and 25 October 1887. Cross MSS. 51,263. Brit. Lib.

centre of the country would I think be well worth a guarantee without which any such scheme will end abortively like so many other railway projects in Persia. What the Telegraph has already done the railway will repeat & multiply [. . .]

The Country is not so badly governed as people suppose. Life & property are as a rule wonderfully safe and the remarkable freedom of speech and behavior which prevails does not indicate that the people are cowed by oppression [. . .]

The people are one of the finest races in the world, physically & intellectually. They are imbued with a strong sense of nationality, and through their art, literature & general culture exert an influence in the East out of all proportion to their military power.[90]

Wolff, supported by the Shah's most powerful minister, Amīn al-Sulṭān, persuaded the Shah to issue a decree declaring his people secure in their lives and property subject to the working of the religious and civil laws. This was designed to create an environment which would encourage enterprise and strengthen Iran from within as well as improve the way it was viewed from without. The proclamation was not enforced. Deterioration rather than advance characterized the later years of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's reign. Writing in 1895, a year before the Shah's assassination, the British military attaché argued that emphasis on development through encouragement of trade and improving communications had been the wrong approach: effort should have been directed to the administration since maladministration was the chief evil. He was convinced that no good was possible without a reorganisation of the system of government. This diagnosis, whether accurate or not, did not go any way to furnishing a remedy; reorganisation of the system of government was impossible without a degree of control comparable to that which the British exercized in the Indian Native States. At no time did British policy-makers contemplate such an extension of responsibility to Iran.[91]

Among Wolff's successes in 1888 and 1889 was the Shah's proclamation, in October 1888, which opened the river Kārūn to the trade of all nations. Flowing through Khūzistān, the Kārūn had special significance for British trade, and facilitated entrance to the interior provinces. A project which Sir George Chesney and other British officials had advocated years before was thus accomplished. Early in 1889 George de Reuter received permission to establish a national bank as part settlement of his father's long-standing claims: the

[90] Report by Arthur Herbert, 7 December 1886. FO251/57. Cf. Col. Murdock Smith to Sir O.T. Burne, 2 March 1887. Smith MSS. NLS.

[91] Memorandum on the past and present policy in Persia, 31 August 1895. FO60/566. Sir Mortimer Durand to Kimberley, 21 March 1895. Kimberley MSS. For a sketch of Amīn al-Sulṭān see Confidential Biographical Notices of Persian Statesmen and Notables, August 1905, compiled by George P. Churchill, Calcutta, 1906. Revised in September 1909, Calcutta, 1910. Minto MSS, 12,657 and 12,593. NLS.

Imperial Bank of Persia was to function until the early 1950s. Finally, in December 1889, two important Orders in Council relating to consular jurisdiction in Iran and the Gulf were promulgated,[92] but thereafter Wolff's effectiveness was gravely undermined, if not shattered, by the events of 1890–1.

The Kārūn proclamation and the bank concession provoked an angry Russian reaction. The key to internal change and a genuine community of interest with Great Britain was railway construction. Iran had only two railway lines. One, between Tehran and the shrine of Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm ran for six miles and was worked by a Belgian company. The other extended for a few miles from Āmul in Māzandarān to the Caspian. Built by an Iranian merchant, it had fallen into disrepair. Yet in spite of this virtual lack of any railway, in March 1889 the Shah gave in to Russian pressure and agreed not to allow any railway construction for five years. In a more formal agreement in November 1890 the Iranian Government undertook "neither itself to construct a railway in Persian territory, nor to permit nor grant a concession for the construction of railways to a Company or other persons". It was widely believed that the railway agreement also bound Iran to allow the passage of Russian troops through her territories should hostilities break out between Russia and "any other Asiatic Power".[93] The Shah's capitulation was in the face of strong British efforts to persuade him to retain his freedom of action, including the offer of diplomatic support in Saint Petersburg.[94] Once Russia succeeded in obtaining the ban on railway construction, Lord Salisbury became far less hopeful of schemes "for stiffening Persia", and more inclined to look to the protection of British interests in the south.[95]

The Tobacco Concession granted to a British subject in March 1890 had further grave consequences. This concession has, in the Parliamentary debate which it provoked and in more recent historical writings, been represented as capitalist exploitation of the weak. An examination of the documents does not bear out this simple interpretation. The cancelling of the tobacco concession undoubtedly represented a further triumph for Russian intrigue and a corresponding decline in British influence. It turned the shrewd and powerful Amīn al-Sulṭān away from the British in favour of the Russians. It dangerously

[92] For the opening of the Kārūn River and the promulgation of the Orders in Council see appropriate case volumes in the Public Record Office. FO60/518, 519, 520, 549, 550. See also FO97/590.

[93] Nicolson to Rosebery, tel. no. 63, 7 April 1886. FO60/481. Enclosure in Wolff to Salisbury, no. 201, secret and confidential, 1 October 1888. FO60/495. Count Lamsdorff to A.N. Speyer, secret, 30 September/13 October 1904. *Krasnyy Arkhiv* LIII, 16–17, 34.

[94] Salisbury to Sir Robert Morier, tel. no. 34, 10 November 1890. FO65/1395. Memoranda by J.E.F. on Persian railways, Secret, 20 June and 3 July 1911, IOR. L/P&S/18/C122 and 124.

[95] Salisbury to Morier, private, 10 May 1891. Salisbury MSS. Christ Church, Oxford.

undermined such authority as the Shah retained. It greatly increased the power of the ʿ*ulamā*. The compensation which had to be found in 1892 for the cancellation of the concession inaugurated Iran's national debt. Some have seen the agitation connected with the tobacco concession as marking the beginning of the manifestation of public opinion in Iran, and as the forerunner of the constitutional movement in the early 20th century and of the recent Islamic revolution.[96]

Early in the disturbances resulting from this concession Wolff's health broke down and he was forced to leave Iran. For the next decade Britain had no strong representative in Tehran. In 1892 Lord Salisbury's ministry ended, ushering in a Liberal government opposed to an active policy in Iran. Iranian conditions worsened. When Lord Lansdowne, as Governor-General of India, pointed out the critical state of affairs, Lord Kimberley's attitude was that "the Shah will become a vassal of the Tsar in reality tho' not in name. I cannot see what we can do to avert it."[97] The reviews of conditions in Iran in 1892–3 and Durand's long memorandum of 1895 vividly describe the internal disintegration, Russian infiltration, and British impotence. The Shah's assassination in 1896 bequeathed the throne to two undistinguished successors, Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh (1896–1907) and Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāh (1907–9).[98]

Thus with the close of the 19th century, it seemed that Russia, although frustrated in her persistent efforts to dominate the Porte, had won the long contest for supremacy in Tehran. In 1900 and again in 1902 Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh borrowed heavily from Russia, accepting dangerous political conditions, including the prolongation of the ban on railway building. Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāh had become a Russian tool while still heir-apparent and was finally forced, after severe and prolonged civil strife, into exile in Russia in 1909. Northern Iran, where new roads afforded the Russians improved mobility, seemed firmly in Russian hands. The penetration of Sīstān and the south began with Russian anti-plague officials going into remote areas in pursuit of political rather than medical objectives. In 1897 a Russian Consulate-General was established at Iṣfahān. This was followed by a consulate at Baṣra in 1899 and, in 1901, by a Consulate-General at Bushire, with an escort of Russian Cossacks. Engineers

[96] Cf. Nikki Keddie, *Religion and Rebellion in Iran* and A.K.S. Lambton, "The Tobacco Regie: Prelude to Revolution", *Studia Islamica* (1965), XXII, pp. 119–57; XXIII, pp. 71–99. Talbot to Salisbury, 6 December 1890; Salisbury to Talbot, 7 December 1890. Salisbury MSS. Christ Church, Oxford.

[97] Kimberley to Lansdowne, 3 February 1893. Kimberley MSS.

[98] Memorandum on past and present policy in Persia, 31 August 1895; Private memorandum on the situation in Persia, 27 September 1895. FO60/566. See also IOL, MSS. Eur. F. 111/69A.

surveyed Iran for lines to connect the Trans-Caspian railway system with the Gulf. Plague studies were also made in the Gulf region, and a subsidized steamship line began to make regular voyages in the Gulf in 1901.[99]

Looking back on a long career at the Foreign Office, Lord Sanderson recalled how, "... during the last 25 years Russia by persistent effort and considerable expenditure has very greatly strengthened her hold over Northern Persia. During all that period we have steadily (and perhaps rightly) refused to make any corresponding expenditure – and have played a losing game. I am accutely sensible of the fact because I sat at the table without a Court Card or trump in my hand." He continued that when Lascelles was in Tehran (in 1893), "his instructions were that if the Russians got to Isfahan they were to be stopped. He wrote back to ask *how* they were to be stopped. Lord Rosebery replied that he had sent to the India Office to find out what their policy was, but found that they had no policy. He hoped Lascelles' Despatches might suggest one!" In an earlier letter, Sanderson had summarized the salient features in the changing balance in Iran, with its growing internal problems and its helplessness in face of the pressures of its northern neighbour. Sanderson told Lord Curzon:

... for the last fifteen years we had been repeatedly warned by the Intelligence Dept. of the W.O. that the improvements made in railways and roads had rendered the Russian occupation of all Northern Persia a comparatively easy and inexpensive operation, instead of being, as previously, a lengthy, onerous costly undertaking partaking of the nature of a mountain campaign [. . .]

As regards railways ... trains run regularly from Tiflis through Erivan to Julfa on the Aras, the boundary of Persia, from whence there is now a good road to Tabriz and on to Tehran. The line has certainly been made within the last few years and the I.D. were never tired of telling us of the network of railways converging through Voronez, Kherkoff and Rostoff on Astrakhan, Petrovsk and Baku by which troops could be brought from all parts of Russia to Persia and Transcaspia.

When Wolff went to Persia in 1887 and I drew up his instructions, there was, I believe a single carriage road in Persia from Tehran to Kum. Five years later the Persians under pressure from Russia made a road from Askabad on the Trans-Caspian Ry. to Meshed. The road from Resht to Teheran was not really completed till about 1899 and cost some £350,000 found by a Russian co. and guaranteed by the Russian Govt. After that we heard of improvements of the road between Teheran and Hamadan, and from Kasvin to Tabreez.

Up to the time of Wolff's arrival or perhaps a little later, the Persian revenues had

[99] Curzon to Salisbury, 12 July and 18 September 1900, Salisbury MSS. Christ Church, Oxford. Confidential Summary of Principal Events and Measures of the Viceory His Excellency Lord Curzon of Kedleston. January 1899–April 1904. Vol. IV. Persian and the Persian Gulf. Minto MSS 12,593, NLS. See also IOL, MSS. Eur. F. 111/353. On the Cossack Brigade, See Kazemzadeh, "The origin and early history of the Persian Cossack Brigade".

covered the expenditure. When on the top of recurring deficits the failure of the Tobacco Regie made a loan necessary I had some long consultations with Sir A. Lyall, who said that an Oriental country which once began to borrow was generally lost. You of course recollect our struggles to bolster the Persian government up, Hicks Beach's insistence that any further loan should be made by Great Britain and Russia jointly, and the manner in which Russia stepped in and guaranteed singly a Persian Loan of 2½ millions. Since then the only chance of a recovery seemed to lie in the discovery of petroleum.[100]

Thus Britain had managed little more than to remain in the contest with Russia. In an atmosphere of overwhelming Russian success, the Shah, as a gesture, had granted to a British subject, William Knox D'Arcy, a concession in 1901 giving extensive rights over petroleum, a concession which at the time did not seem to amount to very much. Reports on the mineral resources of Iran had long been widely circulated. *The Times*, for example, on 10 April 1890, published a special article on the mines of Iran in which the petroleum of a certain district in the southwest was described as "perfectly colourless and exceptionally pure". Wolff had been impressed by the prospects of the development of an oil industry. The Persian Bank Mining Rights Corporation, associated with the Imperial Bank, made some moves to establish an oil industry, but the cost of extraction and transport in that and other enterprises inhibited profitable operations. The Mining Corporation went into voluntary liquidation, which was finally completed in 1901. There was no compensation.

The French archaeologist, Jacques de Morgan, had observed oil seepages in Iran. In February 1892 he published an account of them which made D'Arcy conclude that Iranian oil might be commercially profitable. D'Arcy, an Englishman who had made a fortune from Australian gold, never went to Iran, but was approached by Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, Edouard Cotte (who had been Baron Julius de Reuter's secretary and who was related to de Morgan), and Kitabgi Khan (who had been Director-General of the Iranian customs), when it became apparent that the Persian Bank Mining Rights Corporation could not continue oil exploration. D'Arcy sent his representative, A.L. Marriott, to Tehran in 1901 to negotiate for the oil concession signed on 28 May 1901.[101]

Hardinge, then British Minister in Tehran, lent Marriott some support, but only to a very minor degree. In his report on the granting of the concession, Hardinge recalled many other schemes for the development of Iran put forward near that time, but he thought that the wrecks of these hopeful undertakings precluded further optimism, although he was ready to admit that, should Iranian

[100] Sanderson to Curzon, private, 27 and 30 July 1912. IOL, MSS. Eur. F.112/251.

[101] For other details on these transactions, see also Chapter 18, p. 640 below.

oil be developed to compete with that of Baku, it might become really significant. At the time, however, oil negotiations seemed less important than such matters as Iran's growing financial dependence on Russia and the considerations leading to the Russo-Iranian commercial convention of 1903. Russia had demanded and obtained some compensation for the D'Arcy concession. The *Novoe Vremya* had carried a series of articles pointing out disquieting aspects of the concession: the exacerbation of local influences hostile to Russia which would result from its being excessively opened to European enterprise, and the increased uncertainty and risk of leaving Iran, "as a meal, so to speak, until the time came when we [the Russians] had gathered sufficient strength and resources", effectively to enjoy it.[102]

An indication that the British did not intend this "meal" to be left for Russia came in a Parliamentary debate in January 1902. Joseph Walton, who had recently visited the country, initiated the first debate on Iran since that on the Tobacco Concession ten years earlier (26 May 1892). Walton proposed that "adequate measures should be taken for the safeguarding of the commercial and political interests of the British Empire in Persia". This debate was significant because it foreshadowed both the stronger British line in Iran then being formulated and also the line which Sir Edward Grey was later to take.

Viscount Cranborne (later, 4th Marquis of Salisbury), Under-Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs, defined the government's policy. Important political and commercial interests had been developed in Iran which would be protected. As he put it, "it would be impossible for us, whatever the cause, to abandon what we look upon as our rightful position in Persia. Especially is that true in regard to the Persian Gulf." Grey, by contrast, passed over British interests, questioned whether any other power was jealous of Britain's position there, and ridiculed Curzon's attitude towards the concession of a Gulf port. He doubted that the buffer-state principle could be applied in an Iran in process of disintegration and nothing more than "a weak state propped up by two strong Powers". Instead of dwelling on the fiction of an independent Iran, the British should exercise "unrelaxed efforts to come to an understanding with the Russian Government". Britain should look at their policy in Asia as a whole and settle questions with Russia on the basis of that whole. They should find out what Russia really wanted, and in the light of the whole, try to meet those demands.[103] *The Times* in

[102] Arthur Hardinge to Lansdowne, no. 10 commercial and confidential, 26 April 1901; same to same no. 16 commercial, 30 May 1900. FO60/731. Enclosures in Scott to Lansdowne, no. 121, 5 April 1902. FO248/754; and no. 295, 25 August 1902. FO248/755.

[103] *Parliamentary Debates*, Fourth Series, Commons, 22 January 1902, CI, 574ff.

its leading article the next day (23 January 1902), described Grey's remarks as "cryptic and perplexing". Its editors were jubilant over the government's firm declaration of policy. In India, Baron Hermann Speck von Sternburg, representing the German government, wrote to his friend Theodore Roosevelt:

I see that at last the British Government has given expression to her policy as regards the Persian Gulf... Russia is bound to have her port there and to connect it with her Trans-Caspian system. This would mean a fatal blow to India, as it would isolate India from Minor Asia. Curzon is putting on all possible pressure to establish British supremacy in the Gulf & keep out the rest of the world there. He is perfectly right in doing so, only I don't see how he can stop Russia by force on her onward march through Persia... Well, I hope for the sake of old England, that her great Asiatic problems will meet with a peaceful solution – As things stand now after Lord Cranborne's declaration of England's policy in the Persian Gulf, the attitude the leading Russian papers take in relation to the same questions, and Curzon's statement that Russian occupation of a port in the Gulf or of Southern Persia would mean a war which would ring "from pole to pole", the ways to a peaceful solution of the greatest question of the old world seem to be honeycombed by mines. – Then comes Germanies [*sic*] railroad tapping the Gulf.[104]

In August 1902 Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh visited England. Hardinge tried to please the Shah by avoiding factories, long speeches, operas, and naval reviews which entailed setting foot on board ship. Landsdowne paid him personal attention, transacting amidst the festivities business in the form of full and frank conversations with the Shah and his prime minister, but the whole trip was soured by the Garter episode. Queen Victoria had bestowed the Order of the Garter on Nāṣir al-Dīn in 1873. His son and successor coveted it too, and would accept no substitute. King Edward VII refused to confer the distinction on a Muslim and resented being told what decorations he should give. The Shah left England "very unhappy" without the Garter, but amends were made by the special mission to Iran of Viscount Downe, who invested Muẓaffar al-Dīn with the Order in February 1903, to arouse the jealousy of Constantinople and the resentment of Japan.

The Shah's visit contributed to the revival of British interest in Iran. *The Times* sponsored the long tour of Valentine Chirol through the country in 1902–3. His articles appeared in twenty instalments from October 1902 to April 1903 and recall those written by Curzon more than ten years earlier. Chirol, like Curzon, used his opportunity for observation as the basis for a book.[105] Several

[104] Baron Hermann Speck von Sternburg to Theodore Roosevelt, Calcutta, 26 January 1902. Theodore Roosevelt MSS. Library of Congress.

[105] Valentine Chirol, *The Middle Eastern Question*. For the early usage of the term "Middle East", see Clayton Koppes, "Captain Mahan, General Gordon, and the Origins of the Term 'Middle East,'". In 1903, Lord Selborne told Curzon: "The Middle Eastern Question is the question of the future – Persia and Afghanistan", IOL, MSS. Eur. F.111/229.

leading articles accompanied Chirol's special contributions. *The Times* (21 April 1903) supported Chirol's conclusions and declared that the time had come to stop mumbling old phrases about the *status quo* and the integrity of Iran. The government must, before it was too late, "breathe into them a real life and meaning".

Nevertheless, the year 1903 opened inauspiciously for the British in Iran. The bestowing of the Garter early in February was designed to bring the Shah closer to Britain, but on the day of the ceremony in Tehran an announcement from Saint Petersburg made public the details of the revision of the Russo-Iranian trade treaty. Hardinge had known that negotiations were in process in 1901 and had hoped that the Shah's visit to England would have an impact. The announcement disclosed that the new commercial convention had been signed at Tehran on 27 October 1901, ratified shortly after, and would come into force on 14 February 1903.

This new commercial convention of 1903 shifted Iran's tariff from the 5% *ad valorem* basis, set up at Turkmānchai in 1828, to an elaborate system of specific duties which promoted Russian trade in Iran to the detriment of Anglo-Indian commerce. For example, piece goods which under the old system were charged 5% *ad valorem*, were raised to 9%. These goods came mainly from England. There was also a 10% duty on tea, which came almost exclusively from India. Iran's principal exports to England and India were wheat, barley, and sesame seed, charged $13\frac{1}{2}$, 25, and $10\frac{3}{4}$% respectively. On the other hand, Russian sugar was reduced to $2\frac{1}{4}$% and petrol (from Baku) to $1\frac{1}{2}$%.[106]

Spurred by this Russian trade victory, the Commercial Intelligence Committee of the Board of Trade in London sponsored H.W. Maclean's investigation into conditions and trade prospects in Iran. He made an extensive tour in Iran and published a comprehensive and not altogether pessimistic report in 1904.[107] Percy Sykes, the British Consul at Kirmān, complained that the southeastern section of Iran had not received proper coverage. Curzon succeeded in interesting only the Upper India Chamber of Commerce, which sent A.H. Gleadowne-Newcomen on a mission to Iran which was more of a private business venture than a government-sponsored tour. The mission set out in 1904 and completed

[106] Aitchison, text of the convention between the Emperor of Russia and the Shah of Persia regulating their commercial relations and modifying Article III of the Additional Act of 10/22 February 1828, pp. lxxxii–lxxxv. Summary of treaty and leading article in *The Times* 20 February 1903; see also open letter, 7 May 1903. John Tyler, Vice-Consul General in Charge, to David J. Hill, Teheran, 25 February 1903. Persia, XI, American Department of State.

[107] Report on the Conditions and Prospects of British Trade in Persia by H.W. Maclean, Special Commissioner of the Commercial Intelligence Committee of the Board of Trade. Cd. 2146. (1904). See also MSS. Eur. F111/357 and 359.

its task in 1905. Gleadowne-Newcomen's report emphasised that "one of the axioms adopted by Russia is the absolute identity of trade and politics".[108]

The most decisive statement about British policy was Lord Lansdowne's declaration in the House of Lords of 5 May 1903. He said:

> we should regard the establishment of a naval base, or of a fortified port, in the Persian Gulf by any other Power as a very grave menace to British interests, and we should certainly resist it with all the means at our disposal.

Lansdowne thought that economic development in the south should be encouraged, and admitted that the consular service had been undermanned.[109] *The Times* (7 May 1903) "unreservedly congratulated" the government and called Lansdowne's pronouncement "the Monroe Doctrine of the Persian Gulf". Curzon was jubilant. It was what he had sought for years. In November and December 1903 Curzon toured the Gulf, accompanied by Hardinge. French diplomats in Tehran perceived Hardinge as a man of a different calibre from his predecessors. The struggle with Russia promised to be interesting to watch. Hardinge obtained from the Government of India a force of mounted guards, mostly Sikhs, to act as an escort for the British minister as a counterweight to the escorts of the Russian minister and consuls. Hardinge's most notable achievement was to break the Russian loan monopoly in 1903. Along with this activity in India and Iran went a thorough review, in London, of British options and interests, which largely owed its impetus to A.J. Balfour. But just as it gained momentum Iranian policy was overshadowed by other developments.[110]

At the beginning of the 20th century far-reaching revisions were under way in the formulation of British foreign policy, and in 1905 three widely separated events changed the course of Iranian history besides altering the British position in Iran. First, Japan's decisive defeat of Russia in the Pacific proved that one of the two Powers which dominated Iran was not invulnerable, while it strengthened the conviction in influential circles in Great Britain that Germany, not Russia, was the power to fear. In Britain, a Liberal government came into office at the end of 1905. The Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, worked for a settlement with Russia. How far the real drive came from Grey is open to

[108] "Commercial Mission to South-Eastern Persia: A Summary of the A.H. Gleadowne-Newcomen 'Report on the British Indian Commercial Mission to South-Eastern Persia during 1904–5,'" *Geographical Journal* XXIX (1907), pp. 212–15. Gleadowne-Newcomen, *Report*. See also MSS. Eur. F111/389. Russia responded by sending two commercial missions to southern Iran.

[109] *PD*, Fourth Series, Lords, 5 May 1903, CXXI, pp. 1329ff; quotation from p. 1348.

[110] Memoranda by Balfour for Lord Lansdowne, 12 December 1901 and 21 December 1903, Add. MSS. 49727 and 49728, for his views on the new direction of foreign policy and its relation to India, Persia and Afghanistan.

question, since strong evidence points to Sir Charles Hardinge and Sir Arthur Nicolson as the architects of Britain's Russo-Iranian policy before the First World War. For Grey, Iran was more an irritant than a cornerstone of Indian defence. Meanwhile, in Iran itself national stirrings culminated in the Constitutional Movement which came to a head in 1905–6. The British minister, Sir Cecil Spring Rice, wrote that the spirit of patriotism had come and seemed to have come to stay. These developments, which promised to transform the country into an effective buffer-state, the professed objective of British policy throughout the 19th century, coincided with a radical transformation of British priorities in general foreign policy, with particularly unfortunate consequences for Iran.

In Russia, the disasters of the Japanese war promoted drastic revisions of policy, as the Boer War had done in England. The proceedings of the Russian Special Council for Persian Affairs in 1906 stated that, "In Persia the aim had been the striving towards an outlet to the Persian Gulf, which idea had included that of building railways in the south". While the main Russian interests lay in the north, it had been envisaged that eventually Iran would become dependent in its entirety on Russia. To accomplish this Russia had already spent 72 million roubles in Iran. In the changed circumstances the traditional policy could not be sustained. Therefore, the decision was taken to respond to British overtures for an agreement over the Indian border territories, including Iran.[111]

Fear of Germany advanced Britain's determined efforts to reach an understanding with Russia, and kept the understanding together through the stresses which were put upon it in the years before the outbreak of the First World War. After the promulgation of the Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907, relations between Britain and Iran steadily deteriorated. According to a Persian proverb, enemies are of three kinds: "enemies, the enemies of friends, and the friends of enemies". To the Iranians, Russia was an enemy in the first category. Britain joined her and became an enemy too, although, as a result of those revisions in British foreign policy already referred to, Iran had become a distinctly peripheral concern for the British cabinet in London. Soon Britain was so eager to reach agreement with Russia, that an early draft of the Anglo-Russian Convention document indicates Britain's readiness not to oppose the opening of the Dardanelles to warships of all classes. As early as 1903 Lord Selborne had apprized Lord Curzon, in India, of the way the cabinet's thinking was likely to develop. In a letter written some ten months before Curzon's "flag-showing" tour in the Persian Gulf, he warned the advocate of vigorous policies towards Russia in

[111] *Krasnyy Archiv* LVI, pp. 60ff; LIII, pp. 14ff.

Asia that *European* military and naval balances were seen to need heavier expenditure on naval than on military requirements. In other words, a policy was already being envisaged in London that Harold Nicolson could later pinpoint, when he wrote "the Anglo-Russian Convention had been concluded solely in the interests of the European balance of power". As Selborne told the Viceroy, this balance meant augmenting naval estimates at the expense of the army, with the inference that diplomacy with Russia would have to be resorted to over areas of potential friction in Asia.[112]

Meanwhile in Iran the search for oil went on. There was a widely circulated story that G.B. Reynolds received a cable instructing him to dismantle the drilling-rig and move everything away (probably in April 1908) but he decided to wait for the confirmatory letter – a decision which he knew would give him another month or five weeks to work. Before this letter arrived, No. 1 well at Masjid-i Sulaimān struck oil on 26 May 1908. Thus, according to this version, the D'Arcy venture only just escaped being another addition to the list of Iranian business and investment failures.

By the time oil was struck the Anglo-Russian Convention had been concluded. Negotiations for it reveal no evidence of any attempt being made to protect economic interests, the oil concession being no exception. The Liberal government was committed to widespread domestic reform and to reducing naval and imperial expenditures. In 1907 it dissolved the Admiralty Petroleum Standing Committee. But when Winston Churchill became First Lord of the Admiralty in 1911, renewed activity resulted in the formation of new governmental committees, which began negotiations with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company which had been formed in April 1909.

The Iranian oilfield was about 110 miles north northeast of Khurramshahr (then Muḥammara). The pipeline, completed in June 1911, had an annual capacity of 400,000 tons. A site for a refinery was chosen on Ābādān island. In 1909 A.T. Wilson (later Sir Arnold) noted in his diary: "I am on my way to Mohammerah for a preliminary survey of land needed on Abadan by the Oil Company for a refinery. They want a square mile of desert." The *farmān* by which the Arab tribes held Ābādān forbade its sale, so the British by an agreement with the Shaikh of Muḥammara leased the land for a yearly rental

[112] Early drafts of the Anglo-Russian Convention contained an article relating to Constantinople. See article 17, Sydenham Papers, VI, fol. 138–40, British Lib. Add. MSS 50,836. Selborne to Curzon, 4 January 1903. IOL. MSS. Eur. F.111/229. Harold Nicolson, *Curzon: the last phase* (London, 1934), p. 126.

during the period of the concession. Wilson described the negotiations which he and Sir Percy Cox conducted. These lasted:

> . . . for three or four days: for the Shaikh it was a momentous occasion. He was called upon actively to assist in the establishment within his bailiwick of a company which, as he foresaw, would eventually overshadow all the other commercial and other interests and would inevitably cause the Persian Government to seek to extend their administration (hitherto delegated to him) to every part of Arabistan – a country as different from Persia as is Spain from Germany. As an Arab he hated and feared such a prospect as did his people. Could he rely upon us to protect him? Without a guarantee that we would assist him to the utmost of our power in maintaining his hereditary and customary rights and his property in Persia it would be suicidal for him to meet our wishes. The Home Government authorized Cox to give such assurances, and to extend them to his heirs and successors.

The assurances to the Shaikh of Muḥammara were to hold good only for so long as he and his descendants "observe their obligations to HMG and to the central Government and *are acceptable to the tribesmen*". Though he sent his sons to the American mission school at Baṣra in order to equip them for the challenges of the future, an independent Shaikhdom of Muḥammara did not survive, in spite of the fact that maps drawn in the course of World War I provide for such an independent Arab state.[113]

Despite early problems, the refinery was operational by the summer of 1913. By the time war broke out in 1914 crude oil and refined products were being exported from Iran, the first of the great Middle Eastern producers.[114]

The boundary separating the Ottoman Empire and Iran had remained undefined, occasioning a never-ending succession of frontier incidents. The development of the oil fields in southern Iran revived this problem. As early as 1843 negotiations for a settlement of the frontier had been started. From 1843 to 1865 a large correspondence had accumulated and considerable work had been done by the representatives of the four powers, Iran, the Ottoman Empire, Great Britain and Russia. There were disputes over the area between Mount Ararat and Baghdad where Kurdish tribes lived, over the region between the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates, and over the head of the Persian Gulf,

[113] Greaves, "Some aspects of the Anglo-Russian convention," II, p. 229. Navy (Oil Fuel) Agreement with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, Ltd. Cd. 7419. (1914). Prospectus (1909) of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. File no. 102498. Companies Registration Office. London. Wilson, *SW Persia*, pp. 93, 211; and his *Précis of Relations Tribes and Sheikhs of Arabistan*. Also useful is his *Treaties and Engagements*. Minutes of Sir George Barclay, no. 207, Tehran, 9 November 1909. FO371/715. See also Ferrier, *The History of the British Petroleum Company*, and Owen, *Trek of the Oil Finders*, chs 18 and 19. [114] *PD*, Commons, 17 June 1914. LXIII, pp. 1131ff.

involving the question of sovereignty over the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab. Conferences were convened, surveys were made, and recriminations exchanged.

The first stage of these negotiations had lasted from May 1843 to May 1847. The main lines of settlement arrived at were incorporated into the Treaty of Erzerum of May 1847, ratified in March 1848. The treaty stipulated that in the survey of the boundary itself, which had yet to be undertaken, British and Russian commissioners would be associated with the two parties directly involved. The Crimean war and the Anglo-Iranian war of 1856 suspended work. In 1859 a progress report estimated that another two years would be needed to produce a map. By 1865 the British had completed their map. Discussions took place in Saint Petersburg in 1867 and amendments were agreed to in 1869. By 1870, all the governments involved had copies of the maps. Neither the Iranian nor the Ottoman government was satisfied. A commission of Iranian, Turkish, Russian, and British members was still deliberating in Constantinople when the Serbian war broke out in 1875. By 1885 Britain alone had spent £100,000 on the boundary question, but there was no agreed frontier. The maps had narrowed the problem to a strip of territory ranging from twenty to forty miles wide somewhere in which the frontier would be drawn.

In the conditions of the early 20th century the question definitely had to be resolved. The oil company had carried out some of its earliest drilling operations in disputed territories, which might belong wholly or partly to the Ottomans or to the Iranians. The refinery was built at Ābādān on the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab estuary, where the frontier was still a bone of contention. The boundary survey, again composed of the same four nationalities, finally completed its work just after war broke out. A.C. Wratislaw, for many years British Consul-General at Tabrīz, was the head of the British commission. Sir Arnold Wilson was also associated with the demarcation, as was G.E. Hubbard, who wrote an account of the undertaking. M.V. Minorsky headed the Russian commission. In the final adjustment some oil-bearing territories went to the Ottomans.[115]

Great Britain and Russia pursued a joint policy in Iran until the Russian Revolution, but it was hardly a case of mutual co-operation. For Great Britain, it meant an association, at least in the minds of the Iranians, with Russia in the suppression of the Constitutional Movement, in the occupation of northern Iran by foreign troops, in the bombardment of the Majlis by the Cossack Brigade in 1908, in the violation of the shrine at Mashhad in 1912, and in the expulsion of

[115] WO106/184. G.E. Hubbard, *From the Gulf to Ararat.*

the American financial mission headed by William Morgan Shuster in 1911. But at the same time British people of liberal principles, not least prominent members of the Liberal Party, were deeply concerned about events in Iran, especially when Shuster's mission was terminated and Anglo-Russian relations severely strained in December 1911 as a result. The London "Persia Committee", presided over by Lord Lamington, an advocate both of British imperialism and of British good understanding of Eastern peoples, was described in *The Times* of 10 September 1909 as containing radicals who had used "Platonic" pro-Persian sympathies as a "cloak for . . . Russophobia", which *The Times* leader-writer thought out of place when St Petersburg was proving conciliatory. In fact, membership of the two committees (Parliamentary and non-Parliamentary) included 40 MPs and, although the majority was Liberal, members of the other main party were not absent.[116]

In the melancholy years before the First World War Iran all but ceased to exist as an independent state. The Majlis was dismissed and did not meet again for three years. Ministries were of a makeshift kind and dependent upon the will of the two legations. The titular head of the country was the young Aḥmad Shāh, destined to be the last of the Qājārs. A critical state of financial embarrassment prevailed, which Russia used to strengthen its position in exchange for small loans. The central authority fell into disrepute in the provinces as the penniless Iranian government failed to maintain order. The Anglo-Russian Convention had not contemplated, as Grey put it in 1914, a "political or commercial partition of Persia". He added that events not "foreseen in 1907 have resulted in a military occupation by Russia of the north of Persia and the establishment of a political protectorate there". In a letter to the British ambassador in Saint Petersburg, Grey set out the essentials of the problem in two sentences: "The weakness of our position in Persia is that the Russians are prepared to occupy Persia, and we are not. We wish Persia to be a neutral buffer state; they are willing to partition it." By the time the First World War came it was obvious that the Anglo-Russian Agreement had failed and would have to be redesigned. Grey spoke frankly to the Russians:

> . . . the northern part of Persia, notably Azerbaijan, was now a Russian province ruled by Russian officials. The governor-general refused to acknowledge the authority of the Persian Government in any matter, and did so with the full approval of the Russian authorities. No Persian officials were allowed to collect taxes. These were levied by the Russian consuls and paid into the Russian bank. . . . Land was under every kind of open illegality transferred to Russian immigrants by the square mile, whole villages and their

[116] E.G. Browne, *The Persian Revolution of 1905–1909*, p. 264.

outlying populations were taken formally under Russian "protection," which meant that for all practical purposes they ceased to be Persian subjects. The Cossack brigade paid for by the Persian Government was removed from their control by the simple expedient of the officers declaring that they were under the orders of the Russian Minister of War. The Russian bank used its whole so-called banking machinery for substituting itself for the Persian Government administration and seducing what remained of loyalty to their Government of local chiefs and small people alike.

In this way Persia, whose integrity and independence the Russian Government had solemnly pledged themselves to uphold, had been shorn of her most important provinces. This Russian activity was now systematically pushing further south. . . . unless the situation was remedied . . . the whole policy of Anglo-Russian friendship, on which His Majesty's Government had built, and which was the corner-stone of their foreign relations, would come to a disastrous end . . . The Russian Government had made all government of Persia impossible, and had undermined that State so effectively that it now began to look doubtful whether it could ever be expected to recover. We could not go on pretending to be blind.[117]

Dispositions over Iran formed part of the Constantinople agreement of 1915. Britain received a free hand in the neutral zone, which contained the now important oil fields, in exchange for allowing Russia unfettered action in the large northern zone. In the event of an Entente victory Russia would control Constantinople and the Straits.[118] The Soviet government repudiated these arrangements in 1917.

In the First World War Iran was a battleground for Russian, Turkish and British forces. German agents actively fomented trouble and with considerable success. The Anglo-Russian Convention had created a favourable atmosphere for such activities. To counteract this, the British in 1916 formed the South Persia Rifles, which were not disbanded until 1921. Iran emerged from the war in a state of administrative and financial chaos. The Shah was unsuited to the task of rebuilding a country rent by every sort of internal disorder and racked by famine, malaria, and influenza.[119]

British interests in the country had increased. Oil was an element of national power of the first order. In addition to their Indian commitments, the British were established on Iran's western border. Lord Curzon's perception of Iran as a buffer-state considerably influenced his ardent promotion of the Anglo-Persian Agreement of 1919. This Agreement was to provide for extensive financial and

[117] Memorandum by EAC on Russians in Persia, encl. in Grey to Buchanan, no. 212, Confidential, 8 June 1914. FO 371/2076, partly quoted in Greaves, "Some aspects of the Anglo-Russian Convention", II, p. 301.

[118] Synopsis of our Obligations to our Allies and Others, secret, February 1918. FO899/4.

[119] Annual Report for Persia, 1922. Prefaced by Summary of events from 1914 to 1921 inclusive. FO371/9051.

military assistance to Iran, under the supervision of British officials. The Iranian government rejected the 1919 Agreement in 1921. Thus, after more than a century of close, although by no means harmonious intercourse, the two governments went their separate ways. But by then Iran was moving in a new direction in response to the work and will of one man, Riżā Khān, soon to become Riżā Shāh Pahlavī.[120] Whatever his shortcomings may have been, it cannot be denied that Riżā Shāh controlled Iran with an energy and firmness of purpose which had few precedents. Foreign influence, so long the dominant characteristic of an enfeebled régime, declined markedly.

In conclusion, it can be said that from Napoleon's time until the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 Iran mattered to Britain primarily because of its proximity to India. The inconsistencies prevailing in British attitudes towards both India and Russia affected policy towards Iran. There was first the controversy between masterly inactivity and mischievous activity: between a stationary or an active frontier policy. Then there was the complicated character of the relationship between England and India. Balfour once likened them to allied states. One, supposedly subordinate, retained enough independence to make effective common action difficult. Lord Northbrook's tenacious and successful refusal to carry out the home government's decision (which had not only cabinet approval but cabinet initiative) in 1875–6 to send a British officer to Herat, is only one example of many. The Anglo-Russian Convention decided the issue conclusively. The Government of India's role in policy-making was reduced almost to extinction.

A third deterrent to close Anglo-Iranian relations was the belief held by many British statesmen that Russian power was already dominant in the north of Iran, which included the seat of government. Geography put both beyond England's reach and so made effective co-operation impossible. Finally, the cumbersome administrative arrangements involving the Foreign Office, the War Office, the India Office and the Government of India – sometimes the Law Officers, the Treasury, and the Admiralty – even when not in conflict, made policy formulation slow and ponderous. Salisbury alluded to the "inconvenience of divided rule" in 1879:

In the last twenty years Central Asian politics have been a game of chess in which it was necessary to sacrifice either Persia or Afghanistan in order to leave room for the other to move. But the two being under two co-ordinate authorities instead of under one, our

[120] Biographies of Leading Personalities in Persia, confidential, 23 January 1929. FO371/13783. For the nature and extent of British involvement in Riza's Shah's rise to power, see Wright, *English Amongst the Persians*, pp. 179–84.

policy has never represented the distinct choice of a single mind, but a compromise between two conflicting claims: . . . Shir Ali learned to distrust us – & Persia has never even been disposed to like us.[121]

There were five broad themes in the British diplomatic connection with India and Iran during the 19th century. First, the predominant place of India in the general formulation of British foreign policy. Until recently this has been underrated. Secondly, Britain's Indian policy had almost always to be subordinated to European considerations. Thirdly, the defence of India was a lively issue in British party politics. Fourthly, the policy the British followed in Iran depended primarily upon the needs of India. Finally, it was difficult, if not impossible, to stand, as Salisbury put it, upon the Persian and the Afghan legs at the same time. Therefore, British policy in Iran was neither consistent nor strong. Attitudes in England towards overseas involvements were sharply divided. India was at least thought to be worth keeping, but there were dissenting voices even here.[122]

Marzieh Gail, in her book *Persia and the Victorians*, has said that in the 19th century the two countries became "psychologically interactive".[123] In England, there was certainly a lively demand for the fiction and descriptive writings of James Morier, Malcolm, and James Baillie Fraser. Their works gave to the educated Englishman of the day such ideas as he had about Iran. Morier's picaresque tale of the Iṣfahān barber, Hajji Baba, first appeared in print in London in 1824 and had a great popular success, and many subsequent reprintings. In 1853 Matthew Arnold, inspired at least in part by Burnes's account of his travels to and from Bukhārā, brought out his rendering of Firdausī's story of Rustam and Suhrāb. Six years later, Fitzgerald's *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* appeared. Lady Sheil's *Glimpses of Life and Manners in Persia* (London, 1856) and E.B. Eastwick's *Journal of a Diplomat's Three Years' Residence in Persia* (London, 1864) were only two accounts among many which gave to the English reader impressions of the Iranian scene. Eastwick also translated Saʿdī's *Gulistān*. The Persian dictionary of Edward Henry Palmer, of Cambridge, came out in 1876 and went through a second edition in 1884. Scholarship, and not least that related to Persia, was also indebted to Sir William Jones's founding of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784, and later to Henry Rawlinson's decipherment of the "Persian Cuneiform Inscription at Behistun" (published 1846–

[121] Salisbury to Northcote, 5 December 1878. Balfour MSS, 50,019. Brit. Lib.
[122] Mohammad Anwar Khan, *England, Russia and Central Asia*, pp. 243–4, quoting Argyll.
[123] *Persia and the Victorians*, p. 105. The best treatment of the interaction of the British and the Persia is Wright, *op. cit.*

1851), which yielded not only fresh information about ancient Iran, but ancient Babylonia and Assyria as well, to say nothing of its philological importance. Thus in different ways Iran and its history and literature became known to the British reading public. Then Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh set an example which later Iranian rulers followed when he first visited Europe in 1873. Regarding the English part of his tour, Sir Frederick Ponsonby, wrote "Wherever the Shah went", he was "met by an enthusiasm and a curiosity that it would be as impossible to describe as to account for."[124]

But there was a less constructive side to this Anglo-Iranian relationship. The Iranians, especially after the Russo-Iranian war of 1826–8, developed a habit of mind which blamed the British for many of their misfortunes. Promised British aid had not materialised when it had been badly needed against Russia. Then, it was Britain which stood in the way of the reconquest of Herat – in spite of many descriptions by British travellers of Herat as a typically *Iranian* city. Later, in the 19th and 20th centuries, British economic projects were seen as exploitation, not development. The sense of discontent and futility was immeasurably intensified by the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, and by Iran's vulnerability during the First World War. To ingrained pessimism was added keen resentment. British power came to be ridiculously exaggerated and British influence regarded as all-pervasive. In 1940 this attitude was set out in a Foreign Office minute:

> The idea that we are what Mr Lascelles once called 'the silent, omnipotent Power' which put the Shah on his throne, keeps him there, and arranges and accepts his apparent rebuffs because it suits us to do so for some deep and mysterious reason of our own, is prevalent to an astonishing degree, even among well educated and well informed Persians.[125]

[124] *Sidelights on Queen Victoria* (London, 1930), p. 159.

[125] Minute, 16 January 1940, by Baggallay on Sir Reader Bullard to Mr. Baggallay, no. 308/4/39, 21 December 1939. FO371/24570; quoted in Amirsadeghi and Ferrier (eds), *Twentieth Century Iran*, p. 73.

CHAPTER 12

IRANIAN FOREIGN POLICY, 1921–1979

In recent times, a significant aspect of Iran's foreign relations has been foreign interference in the country's affairs, with varying Iranian response to this. Three major factors have played a determining role in this: Iran's growing strategic and economic importance as an oil producer in a zone of major power rivalry; the national features of Iran as a predominantly Shī῾ī, but socially heterogeneous society, with no consensus over the appropriate form and functions of government; and the need of the rulers of Iran to ensure the continuation of their rule and to govern Iran effectively in these circumstances. Iran's foreign relations between 1921 and 1979 must be studied in this context. This period covers the rule of the Pahlavī dynasty, begun by Riżā Shāh's accession to the throne in 1925, following his seizure of political power through a coup in 1921, and ended with the overthrow of his son, Muḥammad Riżā Shāh, in 1979. The collapse of the Pahlavī dynasty opened the way for its major opponent, Āyatullāh Rūḥ-Allāh Khumainī, to declare Iran an Islamic Republic and abolish the monarchy.

For historical and analytical purposes, the Pahlavī period is best examined in three parts: Riżā Shāh's rule (1925–1941), Muḥammad Riżā Shāh's *reign* (1941–53) and his *rule* (1953–1979). During each of these periods, foreign powers subjected Iran to different types of pressure and encroachment, influencing the country's domestic and foreign policies in distinct ways. Under Riżā Shāh, while Anglo-Russian rivalry over Iran was kept in abeyance as the two powers' changing interests dictated, Iran's foreign policy reflected various short-term attempts to maintain this situation and benefit from it in the assertion of Iran's independence. During Muḥammad Riżā Shāh's *reign*, which commenced immediately after the wartime Anglo-Soviet occupation which lasted until 1946, Iran entered a phase of renewed striving for independence and for some sort of "democratic" order, but remained unable to follow a consistent foreign policy until Muṣaddiq practically eclipsed the Pahlavī régime with his firmly nationalist policy that the Shah later called "negative nationalism". The situation under the Shah's *rule* changed drastically. His reassertion of power was encouraged and aided by the United States. Thus the course was set for Iran's foreign policy to be determined mainly by his régime's "dependence" on Washington, with the resulting convergence of Iran's interests with those of the West.

In the 19th century, the strategic location of Iran between Russia and Great Britain's colonial presence in India rendered the country of concern to both powers. While Russia regarded Iran as vital to its security and as a gateway to the "wealth of India", Britain found it increasingly important to the defence of its colonial interests. As a result, the two powers engaged in a prolonged rivalry over Iran. The rivalry grew so intense that the British Viceroy of India, and one of the major protagonists of British imperialism, Lord Curzon, commented that Iran, together with Afghanistan, Turkistan and Transcaspia, constituted "the pieces on a chessboard upon which is being played out a game for the domination of the world . . ."[1]

The broad objective of the two powers was to consolidate the position of Iran as a buffer zone, so that neither would be able to threaten the other's security and interests directly. They could not, however, achieve this without influencing Iranian politics. A quest therefore developed for respective spheres of influence in Iran. The powers divided the country into a Russian zone of influence in the north and a British zone in the south, with a "neutral" area under the nominal administration of the Tehran government between the two zones (cf. map 8). While the Tehran government was to be responsive to the powers' pressures and needs, "each zone was to be dependent on its respective patron power for protection and the conduct of its political and economic affairs".[2] The rival powers formally agreed to the division in the Saint Petersburg Convention of 1907, although Russia did so reluctantly, under pressure from growing domestic unrest and after defeat by Japan in the war of 1904–5.[3]

In the meantime, the discovery of commercially viable quantities of oil in southern Iran added a new economic dimension to the strategic significance of Iran, and consequently to Anglo-Russian rivalry. In 1901, the Iranian monarch, Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh, granted the first oil concession to an English entrepreneur, William Knox D'Arcy, for the exploration and exploitation of oil throughout Iran for sixty years, except in the five northern provinces, the Russian sphere of influence. Fourteen years later, the British government acquired a majority share-holding in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company which had been formed in 1909; the British government undertook not to become involved in the Company's commercial activities. The British soon managed to develop the Iranian oil industry into a leading export concern, giving Britain far more influence in Iranian economic and political matters than Russia.[4] The Russian government

[1] Curzon, p. 3. [2] Saikal, p. 12.
[3] For details of the Convention concerning Iran see Hurewitz, pp. 266–7.
[4] See Shiwadran, pp. 33–7, and Sampson, *The Seven Sisters: The Great Oil Companies and The World They Shaped.*

could do little more than accept this, given its increasing domestic problems and the need to forge an alliance with Britain in the mounting tension before World War I. The overthrow of the Tsarist régime and subsequent seizure of power by the Bolsheviks, together with Russia's collapse into civil war, provided Britain with more reason and further opportunity to strengthen its position in Iran, encroach on the Russian zone of influence, and to use it as a base against the Bolsheviks. Hence, the British were able to force the Iranian government to consent to the Anglo-Iranian Treaty of 1919. Had the Treaty been approved by the Iranian *Majlis* (National Assembly), it would have enabled Britain to control the country's foreign, defence and financial affairs, and thus to reduce its position to that of a virtual British protectorate.[5]

Anglo-Russian rivalry owed much of its scope to the weakness of Iranian government, which left the country's foreign policy vulnerable to manipulation throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries. During this period Iran suffered from frail political, economic and social structures, under the autocratic, but impoverished, Qājār dynasty. Although the Iranian people were accustomed to absolute monarchy, the Qājār dynasty suffered from inefficient and corrupt administration and and a weak and unreliable army. The constitutional and political system provided little room for reform. As a result, the sense of nationalism was tentative, contending "with the country's widely dispersed population, difficult terrain, absence of an effective communication network, and above all, volatile society. The society rested upon a complex and delicate web of interactions"[6] between the monarchy, Shīʿī clergy, the professional and commercial strata, and the diverse ethnic groups. Whenever these interactions were upset, Iran was exposed to violent stress. There was undoubtedly a link between the international situation and Anglo-Russian interference in Iran. The two processes were exacerbated at the cost of Iran's national cohesion, stability and progress, while the country had no defence against Anglo-Russian competition and its consequences, one of which, however, was that, ironically, Iran was never completely eliminated as a distinct political entity.

If the forces opposing foreign domination were to acquire the necessary strength to mount a successful challenge to Anglo-Russian interference, Iran had to implement certain domestic changes. A movement, led mainly by Western-inspired intellectuals, merchants, and Shīʿī theologians, began at the start of the century. The movement, whose members subsequently became known as Constitutionalists, made demands for constitutional reform to subject

[5] The text of the treaty is in Sanghvi, pp. 337–8, p. 138. [6] Saikal, p. 16.

the monarchy to the rule of law and modernize the political and social system in order to bring about national consensus and unity. The movement initially secured the liberal Constitution of 1906, which prescribed a constitutional monarchy with parliamentary and theological checks and balances and enforced, with some interruptions, a semblance of constitutional government between 1909 and 1921. In regard to foreign affairs, the Constitutionalists opposed, although through no clearly articulated policy, Anglo-Russian interference, and demanded respect for Iran's sovereignty and territorial integrity. The foreign policy of the constitutionalist governments indicates that they sought to reduce the effects of the Anglo-Russian rivalry by maintaining a balanced relationship with the two powers, close friendship with a third power (preferably the United States, a geographically distant and largely non-colonial country) and Iran's neighbours, and Iranian neutrality in international disputes which did not threaten Iran directly.[7]

The constitutionalist achievement, in both domestic and foreign fields, was limited. This was due to two main causes. First, the Constitutionalists lacked unanimity of opinion. They also faced opposition from the Qājār dynasty, which sought support against them from both Russia and Britain, in return for its *de facto* recognition of their zones of influence in Iran.[8] This, together with some of the Constitutionalists' *ad hoc* "democratic" changes, worsened the country's social and economic situation, allowing various tribal groups to grow strong and claim autonomous rule, sometimes with encouragement from foreign powers.[9] Secondly, Russia and Britain had not yet reached parity in Iran to enable them to lessen their interference; instead, they had entered a temporary, wartime alliance, which allowed both of them to engage in further operations within their respective zones and, if possible, beyond them. Thus, the Constitutionalists could not effectively challenge the foreign powers. Because of this, Iran had to await a new leadership to conduct the country's domestic and foreign affairs.

RIŻĀ SHĀH'S REIGN

This leadership came with the dramatic rise of Riżā Khān, commander of Iran's Russian-trained and only effectively disciplined military force, the Cossack Division. Riżā Khān rose to power and assumed the position of *Sardār Sipāh*

[7] See Ramazani, *Foreign Policy 1500–1941*, Part Two.

[8] Saikal, p. 19. For excerpts of the Treaty see: G. Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran, 1918–1948: A Study in Big-Power Rivalry* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1949), Appendix 1, pp. 317–18.

[9] See Ramazani, *op. cit.*, Part Two.

(Commander-in-Chief) of the armed forces in a political partnership with a leading pro-British nationalist figure, Sayyid Żiyā al-Dīn Ṭabāṭabā'ī, who became prime minister in a coup in 1921. Riżā Khān, however, soon proved to be the major figure. He quickly rid himself of Ṭabāṭabā'ī and, in 1923, became prime minister. He became Shah in December 1925, by a vote of the Majlis after an amendment to the Constitution of 1906. He thus superseded the Qājār dynasty. He established the Pahlavī dynasty and, although constitutional forms were observed, in effect succeeded in imposing absolute rule. He thus appealed to Iranians both socially and traditionally, whilst retaining the Constitution of 1906 and the Majlis as a source of legitimacy for his actions.

Riżā Shāh has been labelled both a British agent and a sophisticated nationalist modernizer. He was, however, primarily a self-educated soldier, who opposed Iran's chaotic national condition and the country's humiliating position as a pawn in Anglo-Russian rivalry. He wanted to rescue Iran from national collapse and reassert its national identity. His vision for Iran was enlightened but authoritarian. He emphasized a balanced approach to the conduct of Iran's foreign relations, and the achievement of national unity, stability and modernity under a centralized leadership. He believed that only thus could Iran conduct its own affairs and avoid the vulnerability to foreign interference that ensued from domestic weakness. He understood both the Iranian people's traditional respect for powerful leadership, and the causes of Anglo-Russian involvement in Iran. Meanwhile, both regional and international circumstances had changed favourably for Iranian independence. In Russia, the Bolsheviks had undertaken the transformation of the country into a Marxist-Leninist state. They faced formidable opposition from the White Russian and British forces that operated from bases in northern Iran. While the Bolsheviks twice occupied Gīlān, in 1920–1, and supported the ethnic, quasi-communist Mīrzā Kūchik Khān in setting up a pro-Moscow independent republic there, they were also eager to pursue good relations with Iran in order to neutralize British activities there. It became clear to the Bolsheviks that they should refrain from any action that could increase Iran's dependence on Britain. Lenin and Rothstein, who, in November 1920, became Soviet Ambassador to Iran, held that "any attempt on . . . [the Soviet] . . . part to start revolution in any part of Persia would immediately throw it into the arms of the British, who would be received as the Saviours of the Fatherland".[10]

[10] Fischer, I, p. 430.

By this time, Britain had realized that it could neither rely on a successful counter-revolution in Russia nor sustain the cost of its military support of the White Russians. It had also come under pressure from anti-British feeling in the region, especially in India, Afghanistan and Turkey, which required it to reduce its competition with Russia in favour of maintaining its position in these areas. Britain therefore reduced its support for Shaikh Khazʿal (cf. p. 222) in the oil-producing Khūzistān province and adopted a low profile in regions formerly comprising its zone of influence in southern and south-eastern Iran, while it withdrew from the north-west, whence it had mounted support for the White Russians.[11]

Thus, both Russia and Britain, after a long period of intervention in Iran, found themselves having to curtail their involvement in the country. They both favoured a stable Iran under an effective leadership, capable of assuring the rival powers that it would respect their interests whilst maintaining its neutrality. This helped Riżā Shāh prove to Iranians that he had the necessary attributes for government, and to the rival powers that he had the capacity and prudence to rule Iran without undermining the security and interests of one in favour of the other. He was therefore able to begin the process of centralizing power, reorganizing and strengthening the government and security forces and implementing social and economic reforms. He considered success in this absolutely essential for the attainment of political and eonomic stability and the improvement of conditions in Iran on the one hand, and, on the other, for proving to the rival powers that he was capable of making Iran an independent state.[12]

Riżā Shāh at first relied on the surviving diplomatists of the Qājār period for the conduct of Iran's foreign relations. He could not immediately dispense with their experience. However, he soon brought the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the entire foreign policy process under his personal control. He had no choice but to link this policy closely to both changing domestic needs and Anglo-Russian attitudes. He could not adopt a fixed foreign policy, but instead engaged in short-term, variable decisions as the situation demanded. He stressed the same three foreign policy aims as his Constitutionalist predecessors, however: good relations with Russia and Britain; neutrality in world politics; and close friendship with a third power, to provide a counterweight to the British and Russians.

His main priority was the reduction of Iran's dependence on these two

[11] L.P. Elwell-Sutton, "Reza Shah the Great: Founder of the Pahlavi Dynasty" in Lenczowski (ed.), *Iran Under the Pahlavis*, pp. 9–27. [12] See Banani, pp. 112–45.

powers and the lessening and eventual eradication of their influence in Iranian politics. He pursued these ends by balancing Iran's relations with them and playing them off against one another, so that neither side would undermine the stability of Pahlavī rule. Although he always regarded Russia as a greater danger than Britain, one of his first acts was the endorsement of the Soviet-Iranian Treaty of Friendship (1921). In response to prevailing public opinion, he encouraged the Majlis finally to reject the Anglo-Iranian Treaty of 1919 in 1922. While stressing the value of friendly relations with both powers, he pursued a policy of centralization to crush their respective surrogates, Kūchik Khān and Shaikh Khazʿal. He undertook social and economic modernization, turning to European countries and Turkey for expertise, technology and capital, rather than to Russia or Britain. He also implemented judicial reforms to limit the authority of the traditional Islamic legal system and to supplement it with western legal codes, hoping thereby to eliminate one of the most hated symbols of foreign influence in Iran; the system of "capitulations". Under this, foreign powers had secured legal privileges for their nationals in Iran, including the right to be tried by their own consular courts.[13] By 1928, Riżā Shāh was able to abolish capitulations.

All this, however, did not disguise the fact that Britain still owned and controlled the Iranian oil industry and therefore had great influence on Iran's economy and, ultimately, its politics. Dissatisfaction over this grew in Moscow, as well as in Tehran. The latter had long felt that the terms of the D'Arcy Concession were unfavourable to Iran and that Britain had been able to monopolize the Iranian oil industry as an export sector with little benefit to the Iranian economy, and much for the oil company.[14] Riżā Shāh shared this feeling, and asked for the renegotiation of the D'Arcy Concession in order to reduce Iran's dependence on a foreign power, and, at the same time, to obtain higher revenue with which to finance his social and economic reforms. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company (A.P.O.C.) was, at this stage, unresponsive, while, due to the Depression, it paid markedly reduced royalties to the Iranian government in 1931–2. This caused Riżā Shāh to cancel the original Concession in November 1932, and demand a renegotiated agreement. The British rejection of this move precipitated a crisis in Anglo-Iranian relations. After a period of intense negotiation, Britain signed a new concession with Iran on 29 April 1933, valid until 1993, with the condition that it should not be unilaterally cancelled. Although

[13] See A. Saʿīd-Vazīrī, *Niẓām-i Kapitulāsiyūn va Natāʾij-i ān dar Īrān.*

[14] J. Amuzegar and M.A. Fekrat, p. 28.

under the new concession the A.P.O.C. agreed to pay Iran more than before in royalties and dividends, and agreed to increased Iranian participation in the oil industry, the British still maintained their monopoly on Iranian oil from production to shipment, and later hesitated to implement the agreement fully.[15]

Nonetheless, this moderate success provided Riżā Shāh with the opportunity to demonstrate the strength of his leadership and to intensify his efforts towards the achievement of other foreign policy objectives. Iran was already an early member of the League of Nations, a signatory of the Kellogg Pact, and "generally encouraged the peaceful settlement of disputes".[16] Riżā Shāh now laid more emphasis on foreign policy and devoted himself to strengthening Iran's relations with its immediate neighbours; Turkey, Iraq and Afghanistan. He signed a series of agreements over disputed frontiers, "with the aim of forming a 'small-power bloc' that could resist pressures from the imperial powers".[17] This eventually resulted in the Saᶜadābād Pact of non-aggression and consultation between Iran and these three neighbours, in 1937.

Moreover, he shared the conviction of many of his compatriots that close friendship with a third power would provide Iran with the leverage that it needed to defend its integrity and independence. He made continual efforts to establish close ties with the United States and convince it of the value of friendship with Iran. Following Tehran's invitation, in 1922, to the American financial advisor, A.C. Millspaugh, to reorganize Iran's finances, Riżā Shāh hoped to nurture close relations with the United States; but he soon discovered that Washington was less interested in such a relationship than he was, given its policy of isolationism in world affairs, particularly in a region that it recognized as a British sphere of influence. After his direct approach had failed, Riżā Shāh resorted to seeking to involve American oil companies in the Iranian oil industry, and to provoke Washington into concluding a treaty similar to the Treaty of Commerce and Navigation that Iran eventually concluded with the U.S.S.R., in March 1940. However, Moscow demanded that if the American companies were granted an oil concession, the Soviet Union should be given an equal concession, whilst his second move brought no reaction from Washington.[18] Riżā Shāh could finally secure nothing more than limited diplomatic and trade links with the U.S.A.

The second "third power" that Riżā Shāh approached was Germany. The rise of Nazi Germany had impressed the Iranian leadership, as it had other

[15] Lenczowski, pp. 205–6; *Iran under the Pahlavis*; *idem*, "Iran Presents Its Case for Nationalization", pp. 83–6. [16] Elwell-Sutton, *op. cit.*, p. 31. [17] Saikal, p. 23. [18] Avery, pp. 336–7.

nationalist governments and movements in Asia and the Middle East. In an attempt to weaken the British position, Hitler gave generous economic and technical assistance to Iran, as to Turkey and Afghanistan. Growing friendship with Germany resulted. By the end of the 1930s, some six hundred German experts were employed in various industrial, commercial and education projects, and, by 1938–9, Germany accounted for 41% of Iran's foreign trade.[19] Consequently, as Churchill stated, "German prestige stood high" among Iranians.[20] While Britain was alarmed, Moscow also had cause for concern, given its position towards Germany before the signing of the Soviet–German Pact of Friendship, in August 1939. The situation changed when Germany attacked the Soviet Union, prompting Stalin to enter into alliance with Britain. This sudden development, unforeseen by Tehran, proved to be Riżā Shāh's downfall. In face of the German invasion of the U.S.S.R., Moscow urgently needed military supplies from Britain and the United States. Riżā Shāh was unwilling either to denounce Germany or to allow the Allied Powers to use Iran's railway network for the transfer of war supplies to the U.S.S.R. Britain and the Soviet Union jointly invaded Iran in August 1941. They occupied the country along almost the same lines as those on which they had previously divided Iran into spheres of influence. They created a Soviet zone of occupation in the north and a British zone in the south, with a central strip designated as being under the authority of the Tehran government, provided that the latter responded to the two powers' needs and dictates.

Riżā Shāh had already declared Iran's neutrality and was not willing to sever his links with Germany. As he could neither accept nor prevent the Anglo-Russian occupation, he abdicated in favour of his twenty-one year-old son, Muḥammad Riżā, who was crowned on 16 September 1941. Riżā Shāh left for exile, and died in Johannesburg in 1944. He has been severely criticized for his absolutism, and his reforms have often been overlooked. His government structure, and, indeed, his social and economic reforms, began rapidly to crumble. This underlined the fact that throughout his rule, Riżā Shāh failed to construct a durable domestic system or foreign policy which could have enabled him to defend Iran against changes in international circumstances, and especially in Anglo-Soviet relations with it. It became clear that he had been able to resist British and Soviet pressure only because the rival powers had allowed him to do so. He left little behind to help his son to govern the country effectively.

[19] Frye, p. 80. [20] Churchill, p. 90.

MUḤAMMAD RIẒĀ SHĀH'S REIGN

Young, inexperienced and amenable to their dictates, Muḥammad Riẓā Shāh proved more acceptable than his father to the occupying powers. He succeeded to his father's office without inheriting his authority and powers. While the occupying forces largely governed the conduct of Iran's domestic and foreign affairs, the Shah could not control the power structure, administration and security apparatus. Riẓā Shāh's autocratic and centralized system rapidly deteriorated, opening a new phase in Iranian politics. Numerous social and political groups, including the tribes, reappeared on the Iranian political scene, with various demands for freedom, reforms and autonomy. "Some sought the evolutionary institution of some sort of 'democratic' mass participatory system with the retention of monarchy; others demanded revolutionary 'socialist' structural changes, with the establishment of a republic."[21] This did not, however, hinder the development of a nationalist current, led by those political figures, intellectuals, bureaucrats and theologians, who, unhappy with the absolutism of Riẓā Shāh, were now anxious over the chaotic domestic situation and humiliation that Iran faced at the hands of foreign powers. The monarchy, backed by the conservatives, tried to maintain its hold on the main, but demoralized, area of support and means of rule, the armed and security forces, and to work for the eventual withdrawal of foreign troops. Meanwhile, the nationalist current gained strength in the Majlis, which, after twenty years of subordination to Riẓā Shāh's dictates, rapidly emerged as a national forum capable of political expression.[22]

Although divided and unable to articulate a national strategy for Iran, the Majlis began to manifest its opposition to the foreign powers and to demand the creation of a more democratic political system subject to the rule of law. There was thus an inevitable conflict between the executive, dominated by the monarchy, and the legislature. The two sides distrusted each other and could not deal with the occupying forces from a position of united strength. This was in the interests of the occupying powers. The more disunited the Iranians, the easier it was for the powers to prevent them developing a national resistance and to control them by making, as Churchill said, "the Persians keep each other quiet".[23] The powers were thus able to use Iran for their purposes. Initially,

[21] Saikal, p. 26; Also see Abrahamian, "Factionalism in Iran: Political Groups in the 14th Parliament (1944–46)"; H. Kayostovan, pp. 285–308. [22] Saikal, p. 26.
[23] Churchill, p. 99.

London and Moscow declared their occupation of Iran to be temporary. In response to urging from Tehran, they concluded the Tripartite Treaty of 29 January 1942, in which they undertook "to safeguard the economic existence of the Iranian people against the deprivation and difficulties arising as a result of the present war", as well as "to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iran" and to withdraw their forces from Iran "not later than six months" after the end of hostilities in all war theatres. They subsequently confirmed this in the Anglo-American-Soviet Declaration of 1 December 1943.[24]

However, the two powers' objectives in Iran soon developed contrary to their treaty commitments and their stance as allies of Iran. Once they had occupied it, some of their former preoccupations over Iran apparently reappeared, although initially the Russo-British concern was to facilitate, with American technical assistance, the transit of urgently needed war supplies to the Soviet Union beleaguered by the armies of Hitler. Later, the Soviets attempted to profit from the occupation by closing their zone to free entry and beginning its "sovietization". They allied themselves with dissident Kurds and Āẕarbāījānīs, who had ethnic counterparts on the Soviet side of the border. They also revived the small, but pro-Soviet Iranian Communist Party, banned by Riżā Shāh in 1937, under a new name, *Tūda* (The Masses), as a base for ideological expansion. They supported the Kurds and Āẕarbāījānīs in their quest for autonomy, and enabled the Tūda to emerge as a force in Iranian politics. They established an autonomous régime in Āẕarbāījān, for which the Tehran government was barred from appointing a governor in 1944–5.

Similarly, the British, suspicious of the Soviets, found it expedient and, with the risk of German infiltration, necessary to entrench themselves in their zone. They reactivated a policy of "divide and rule", supporting the forces of "conservatism" and "tribalism" against the elements that sought radical changes either against the British or in favour of the Soviets. They supported conservative elements, led by the monarchy, and assisted in the formation and activities of a pro-Western political party, *Īrāda-yi Millī* (The National Will). This was led by the pro-British former prime minister, Sayyid Żiyā al-Dīn Ṭabāṭabāʾī.[25]

The two powers competed with one another and sought to undermine the other's position, in a manner reminiscent, in certain respects, of their past rivalry in Iran, irrespective of their commitment to its sovereignty and territorial integrity. Thus, while pursuing a policy of co-operation at the international

[24] See Hurewitz, pp. 232–4; R.H. Magnus, Comp., *Documents on the Middle East*.
[25] Lenczowski, *Russia and the West*, pp. 235–62.

level, they engaged in a local "cold war", although some observers found Britain more than a little lukewarm, even lax, in its pursuit. Meanwhile, the United States, as a signatory to the Atlantic Charter and the Anglo-American-Soviet Declaration, could no longer remain indifferent to developments in Iran. In retrospect, as suspicion of Soviet activities grew, it seems as if a rehearsal for the future "Cold War" between East and West had already begun in Tehran.

Until 1940, despite Riẓā Shāh's desire for close relations, the United States paid little attention to Iran. In the early 1940s, however, in a re-evaluation of its global position following its entry in to the Second World War, Washington became conscious of Iran's economic and strategic importance. A number of American policy-makers realized that if Iran, as a front-line state, fell to communism, all Western economic and political interests in the region would become vulnerable to the Soviet Union. Wallace Murray, of the Near Eastern Division in the U.S. State Department, advocated opposition to Soviet activities in Iran and the resumption of trade negotiations "for reasons of political expediency and in order to safeguard American trade interests in Iran during the post-war period".[26] During 1943, Washington responded to the request of the Iranian government by sending another financial mission, headed by Arthur Millspaugh, to reorganize the country's finances. Millspaugh subsequently wrote, "our control of revenues and expenditure not only served as a stabilizing influence, but was also indispensable to the full effectiveness of Americans in other fields".[27] Patrick Hurley, the American Special Emissary to the Middle East, advised President Roosevelt that the U.S. needed to exert much greater effort and leadership to help Iran build a "democratic government", based upon a "system of free enterprize", if the country were to remain independent in the post-war era.[28] Washington became more favourably disposed towards Iran, and, in 1944, raised its legation in Iran to embassy status, and publicly joined Britain against the Soviet Union in Iran. The Tehran government was delighted, as it had long hoped for friendship with the United States.

Thus a favourable climate was provided for American oil companies to seek access to Iranian oil-fields. During the first half of 1944, Standard Vacuum and Sinclair by-passed the British and Soviets in seeking to negotiate oil concessions directly with the Tehran government. This displeased the British and added to the discomfort of the Soviet Union, unable to overlook the growing American involvement in Iran. In a counter-move, the Soviet government demanded an

[26] *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers: The British Commonwealth, The Near East and Africa*, III (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1959), pp. 374–82.

[27] Millspaugh, pp. 47–8. [28] Lohbeck, pp. 195–6.

oil concession that would cover all five northern provinces under Soviet occupation, stretching from Āẕarbāījān to Khurāsān.

For all its weakness, the Tehran government under prime minister Sāʿid refused oil concessions to all powers and postponed all current discussion of oil concessions. This largely reflected the mood of the Majlis, which passed a bill prohibiting any government official from either discussing or signing any oil concession agreement with any foreign company or person. The principal architect of this measure was Dr Muḥammad Muṣaddiq, who emerged as a leading spokesman for the nationalists in the Majlis.[29] The Soviets suspected the Iranian government of having made its decision in collusion with the United States and Britain, and voiced deep displeasure over the matter.[30]

The Soviet Union's relationship with its Western allies and the Iranian government sank to its lowest depth when Moscow showed reluctance to honour its treaty commitment to withdraw its forces from Iran within six months of the end of the war. The final date for troop withdrawal, as agreed at the Allied foreign ministers' conference of September 1945, had been set for 2 March 1946. However, the Soviet Union continued to strengthen its forces in its zone of occupation, and to support the autonomous régime in Āẕarbāījān, led by the Tūda. In January 1946, the Iranian government, with U.S. and British support, demanded the withdrawal of Soviet troops, and formally charged the Soviet Union before the United Nations with interference in its internal affairs. This brought the Anglo-Soviet dispute over Iran to the forefront of global politics, enabling the United States to take a leading part in the affair. Despite the advice of the Security Council to Tehran and Moscow to settle their differences bilaterally, Washington and London, which had withdrawn their troops from Iran by 1 January, sent two separate protest notes to the Kremlin, demanding immediate Soviet withdrawal. The American note warned Moscow that Washington "cannot remain indifferent". For President Truman, as for the British Foreign Secretary, Ernest Bevin, the dispute over Iran was no longer regional. "Russian activities in Iran", Truman wrote, "threatened the peace of the world." He stressed, moreover, that, "if the Russians were to control Iran's oil, either directly or indirectly, the raw material balance of the world would undergo serious damage, and it would be a serious loss for the economy of the Western world". While Washington considered it worthwhile to oppose Soviet influence in Iran at all costs, Stalin had also found it imperative for Soviet security and ambitions not to ignore Iran's strategic and oil importance.[31]

[29] See Kirmānī, pp. 557–601.
[30] Lenczowski, *Russia and the West*, pp. 219–21.
[31] Truman, II, pp. 94–5.

As the tension between the Soviet Union and Western powers increased, the Iranian government, under the premiership of Aḥmad Qavām, who replaced Sāʿid in January 1946, achieved a breakthrough in the bilateral talks with Moscow. On 24 March, Moscow unexpectedly announced that it would withdraw all Soviet troops from Iran. The two sides agreed that Soviet forces would leave within a month and a half, that a joint-stock Iranian–Soviet oil company would be set up and ratified by the Majlis within seven months, and that Iran would pursue policies in Āẕarbāījān in accordance with existing conditions under Tūda leadership.[32]

The agreement enabled Moscow and Tehran to defuse the potentially dangerous Āẕarbāījān crisis. But, in the long run, it proved costly for the Soviet Union. It had a marked impact on the Iranian people's view of that country, and reinforced their belief that the Soviets were determined to turn Iran into a socialist satellite. The Iranian monarchy, the British and the Americans exploited the crisis to strengthen anti-Soviet feeling and their own position in Iran. To this end, the U.S. increased its military and economic aid to the Tehran government, while American police and military missions became active in reorganizing and equipping the Iranian security and miltary forces.

This enabled Muḥammad Riẓā Shāh to exert his leadership for the first time as constitutional Commander-in-Chief of the Iranian armed forces, by successfully directing operations against the secessionists in Āẕarbāījān and Kurdistān, in October 1946. In October 1947, the Majlis, led by Dr Muṣaddiq, denounced the Iranian-Soviet agreement over Āẕarbāījān, especially in as far as this agreement had involved discussion of an oil concession. The Iranian government also outlawed the Tūda Party following an attempt on the Shah's life in 1949. There was no ideological alliance in this, rather a mere coincidence of interests between the monarchy and the Majlis. The whole Āẕarbāījān crisis provided an opportunity both for the monarchy to regain some of its lost leadership, and for the United States, now replacing Britain as the major Western power, to secure a foothold in Iranian politics. This provided a necessary basis for Washington to widen its involvement in Iran and to transform the country into an anti-communist Western ally, dependent on the United States.

Until the withdrawal of foreign troops, the Tehran government could initiate little policy independently of the powers' needs and wishes. As a result, it is hard to state that, during the war years, Iran maintained any consistent foreign policy.

[32] For the text see: *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1946, Diplomatic Papers* VII (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office), pp. 414–15.

After the war and the withdrawal of all foreign troops, the Tehran government gained some control over the management of its foreign relations. But this control was heavily qualified by its acceptance of American support, which tilted Iran's position to the West, forestalling Soviet hopes of obtaining influence. There was, however a recrudescence of nationalism, which found all foreign influence in Iran inimical to the country's well-being. This feeling, which dominated the Majlis, became more assertive in Iranian politics following the withdrawal of foreign troops and the consequent discrediting of the pro-British Īrāda-yi Millī and pro-Soviet Tūda parties. Dr Muṣaddiq, a deputy from Tehran, who had first appeared in Iranian politics in support of the constitutionalist movement in the second decade of the century, continued to advocate a democratic parliamentary system with the monarchy subject to the rule of law, the exertion of Iran's ownership and control over its resources, and the implementation of major social and economic reforms as a means of ensuring that Iran's national identity, progress, and independence were protected against foreign domination.

In the Majlis during the war, he had realized that one of the main causes of foreign interference in Iran was the British exploitation of Iran's most vital resource, oil. He had therefore successfully initiated the 1944 Oil Bill, barring further oil concessions to any power. By the late 1940s, Muṣaddiq gained increasing support from the newly formed *Jabha-yi Millī* (National Front). This was a loose grouping of diverse elements, ranging from ultra-nationalists to socialist reformists and religious extremists.[33] Muṣaddiq became a leading spokesman for the Front. Relying on growing popular support, he found it opportune to advocate, above all else, Iran's ownership and control of its oil industry. His aims were to maximize Iran's income from its major source of foreign exchange, eliminate the possible pretext for both British direct activities and Anglo-Soviet rivalry in Iran, and thereby improve Iran's relations with the Soviet Union. Above all, he wished to mobilize Iranian resources in order to implement political, social and economic reforms, and to deprive the throne of initiative in this respect.[34]

However, the Iranian government's efforts failed to secure a more favourable oil agreement with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (A.I.O.C.). The Majlis elected Muṣaddiq to the premiership on 30 April 1951, whereupon he declared the nationalization of the A.I.O.C., on 1 May 1951. While promising compensation, and providing for the continuation of employment of British staff and

[33] Wilber, p. 143. [34] Fātiḥ, p. 525; Ramazani, *Foreign Policy, 1941–1973*, pp. 129–93.

expertise, he set up the National Iranian Oil Company (N.I.O.C.) to manage Iranian oil, on the basis of full ownership and control. The nationalization, however, proved unacceptable to the British Petroleum Company, as the A.I.O.C. now came to be called, and to the British government. London considered that its acceptance would not only be a serious economic loss, possibly opening the way for other Middle Eastern oil producers to follow suit, but also another blow to its declining position as a world power. It therefore rejected the nationalization. This precipitated a crisis in Anglo-Iranian relations. While British Petroleum counted on the solidarity of six other Western oil companies to boycott Iranian oil, and the A.I.O.C. withdrew its personnel and expertise from Iran, the British government imposed a trade embargo on Iran and resorted to action in the International Court of Justice to force a reversal of the decision. As the crisis deepened, Muṣaddiq not only had Iranian nationalist support, but also that of the United Nations. The United States, given its interests in the region and its global opposition to communism, took great interest in the crisis; it felt much sympathy for Muṣaddiq, and was concerned that Britain might drive him into alliance with the Soviet Union. It offered to mediate in the crisis, but this was prevented by Britain, leading the U.S. Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, to conclude that the British were "destructive and determined on a rule or ruin policy in Iran".[35] The Soviets, despite having no particular liking for Muṣaddiq, who had never shown them any special favour, supported his nationalist stance, and urged the Tūda to support him, but were cautious of nationalization, which would have ended any hope of a Soviet oil concession.[36]

In view of Britain's weakening position, London concluded that the best solution to the crisis was the removal of the Muṣaddiq government. The British Foreign Secretary, Sir Anthony Eden, advocated its replacement by a pro-Western conservative government, headed by the monarchy.[37] This seemed feasible because, while the Shah had initially supported Muṣaddiq's nationalization, he was subsequently unwilling to approve either Muṣaddiq's methods or his attempts to limit the powers of the monarchy, attempts which forced the Shah to leave Iran temporarily in mid-August 1953. In the meantime, the situation worsened for Muṣaddiq at home. The British economic blockade and the international oil companies' boycott of Iranian oil caused the country's oil production to drop to 10% of its pre-nationalization capacity. The country's oil revenue fell dramatically. These factors "resulted in serious economic hardship

[35] Acheson, p. 602. [36] Kazemzadeh, p. 67. [37] Eden, p. 201.

and polarization of Iranians into pro- and anti-Mossadeq forces. The anti-Mossadeq forces were centred around the monarchy, which had the support of a large section of the armed forces".[38]

This finally prompted the Eisenhower administration to put America's global strategy against communism above all other considerations, to accept the British assertion that Muṣaddiq was being influenced by the Tūda, and to replace his government by a pro-western régime under the Shah.[39] In late 1953, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, aided by the British Intelligence Service and Iranian conservative forces, engineered the overthrow of Muṣaddiq's government in favour of the Shah. Muṣaddiq was arrested, tried, and sentenced to solitary confinement for three years. The Shah returned from a brief exile to begin his *rule*, but under the aegis of the United States.[40] The Shah accused Muṣaddiq of having been under communist influence and of "treason". He charged him with pursuing a doctrine of "negative equilibrium", which stressed "the ending of Iran's suffering from the influence and domination of foreign powers" by granting "no concession to any foreign power and accepting no favour from any". He branded his own régime's policy "positive nationalism", promoting Iran's sovereignty, independence and development under his own absolute leadership, but in alliance with the West, and the United States in particular.[41]

THE SHAH'S RULE

The Shah's rise to effective power entailed major changes in Iranian politics. His régime faced a broad based domestic opposition and strong hostility from neighbouring powers, especially from the Soviet Union and the "radical" Arab nationalist forces, which considered the Shah an agent of Western imperialism.[42] With this opposition from abroad, the depressed Iranian economy and the weakness of the Shah's power base and armed and security forces, he found it necessary to rely on the United States. For its part, Washington continued its original intervention to ensure the continuity of his régime in line with America's regional interests and global opposition to communism. While the Shah drew

[38] Saikal, p. 43.

[39] For different accounts of these developments, see Avery, pp. 426–39; Nirumand, pp. 73–86; Pahlavi, *Mission For My Country*, pp. 93–110; Arfa, pp. 396–410; and Eisenhower, pp. 160–6. See also Chapter 7, pp. 262–3, above.

[40] U.S. Congress House Committee on Foreign Affairs. *Hearings. The Mutual Security Act of 1954* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1954), pp. 503, 569–70.

[41] Pahlavi, *op. cit.*, p. 84. [42] Kazemzadeh, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

on what he perceived as a Soviet and radical Arab threat in order to secure increasing American aid, the Eisenhower Administration set out to transform Iran, under the Shah, into a dependent American ally. It declared its full political support for the Shah's régime and, to enable it to meet its urgent economic needs, extended grants to it under the U.S. Technical Assistance Programme. It sought to consolidate a long-term dependence of Iran on the United States and to foster the convergence of the country's interests with those of the West, and deepen American involvement in the Iranian oil industry, economy, armed forces and social institutions.

Washington intervened to find a solution to the nationalization crisis favourable to American interests. It succeeded in the formation of an International Consortium to run the Iranian oil industry in place of the A.I.O.C. Details of this consortium's composition will be found in Chapter 20 below: it included British Petroleum, with a 40% share; five American companies, with 8% each; Shell, with 14%; and the Compagnie Française des Pétroles (C.F.P.), with 6%. In theory, the consortium was to act as a customer of the National Iranian Oil Company. But in practice, while acknowledging Iranian ownership of the oil industry, the consortium controlled most of Iran's oil, from exploitation to pricing and marketing, although Iran received more in royalties, had a bigger share in company policy than before, and received 50% of the consortium's profits.[43] The arrangement, the major architects of which were the U.S. Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, and the petroleum advisor, Herbert Hoover, Jr, was accepted by both London and Tehran. The latter signed an agreement with the consortium in November 1954, and resumed diplomatic relations with London shortly after. The settlement of the "nationalization crisis" was a major gain for the United States, which won a determining share in the Iranian oil industry and the capacity to influence the country's economic and political development. The agreement fell short of achieving Muṣaddiq's aim of nationalization, but revived oil resources as the major source of foreign exchange for the Shah's régime. The Shah later remarked that, in the prevailing circumstances of his rule, "it would have been difficult at that time to have concluded a better agreement".[44]

Washington then arranged a multi-million dollar programme of financial and economic aid for Iran. From 1953 to 1957, when the Shah's rule was passing through its most difficult phase, American aid amounted to a total of $366.8 million, followed by an average of $45 million per annum for the next three

[43] For the text see Hurewitz, pp. 348–83.
[44] Cited in address by Amir Abbas Huvaida, Prime Minister (Tehran, 19 July 1973).

years. In 1961, when aid was increased to an annual level of $107.2 million, Iran was one of the major recipients of American economic aid outside the N.A.T.O. alliance.[45] "Along with the inflow of American aid, a large body of U.S. official advisors and technical experts, employees of aid agencies and technical and commercial organizations, and private investors came to Iran. They were to assist the Iranian government in its economic planning and allocation of American aid, provide technical skills, and establish joint ventures with both the Iranian government and entrepreneurs, who were now once again confident that Iran was firmly set in developing a free enterprize system."[46]

The U.S. reinforced its position in the Iranian oil industry and economy by its involvement in strengthening the Shah's armed and security forces as the major instrument of his rule. The Shah had been well disposed towards a slow increase in American military assistance ever since he received the first American military advisory mission in 1942. It was not, however, until his assumption of effective power that Washington began to reorganize and build up his armed and security forces on a massive scale, to guard against both domestic and regional opposition. In 1957, the C.I.A. helped the Shah to establish the State Intelligence and Security Organization (Sāzmān-i Iṭṭilāʿāt va Amniyat-i Kishvar, or S.A.V.A.K.), which became the Shah's most potent force in dominating Iran. In all, during 1953–63, total U.S. military grants-in-aid to the Shah's régime amounted to $535.4 million, the largest post-war military grant to a non-N.A.T.O. country. The number of American military personnel present in Iran reached some 10,000.[47]

Washington also strengthened its position by linking the Shah's régime with the West within a formal military alliance. Under the exigencies of the Cold War, Washington had even considered such an alliance with Muṣaddiq's government. In February 1953, President Eisenhower had argued that a U.S. sponsored "system of alliance" was required in the region against what he called the "enemies who are plotting our destruction".[48] John Foster Dulles envisaged a "Northern Tier" Alliance, comprising Turkey, Pakistan and Iran.[49] Although Muṣaddiq had opposed such an alliance and the "Northern Tier" scheme never materialized, largely because of British opposition, Washington induced the

[45] U.S. Office of Statistics and Reports, *Internal Administration, Foreign Assistance and Assistance from International Organizations, July 1, 1945 through June 30, 1966* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1967), p. 12. [46] Saikal, p. 52.

[47] U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Sub-Committee on the Near East and South Asia, *Hearings, New Perspectives on the Persian Gulf*, June 6, 1973 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1973), p. 105.

[48] *U.S. State Department, Bulletin* 28 (9 February 1953), p. 212.

[49] *Ibid.* (15 June 1953), pp. 831–6.

Shah's régime to sign, on 11 October 1955, the British-sponsored defensive Baghdad Pact, whose other signatories were Iraq, Turkey and Pakistan, and which the United States was expected to join. In July 1958, however, a "revolutionary" republican group overthrew the pro-British monarchy in Iraq and withdrew that country from the Baghdad Pact. This led to the redesignation of the Pact as the Central Treaty Organization (C.E.N.T.O.), of which Iran was a member. Yet once the Shah's régime realized that the treaty was neither designed to help the regional members in their regional disputes, nor capable of preventing a radical group from seizing power, Washington found it expedient to conclude a bilateral military agreement with Tehran in March 1959. Under this treaty, Washington committed itself, in case of aggression against Iran, to take "such appropriate actions including the use of armed force as may be mutually agreed upon".[50] Although a friendly observer, the U.S.A. did not join C.E.N.T.O.

The extensive U.S. involvement in Iran resulted not only in great American influence upon that country's politics and economic affairs, but also in increasing Western social and cultural influence, "particularly among those educated urban Iranians who found the Shah's pro-Western stance desirable and beneficial [. . .] This influence consolidated the overall structure of Iran's dependence on and vulnerability to the United States."[51] This implied a narrowing of the Iranian régime's policy options to a pro-Western, mainly pro-American, stance in its domestic and foreign policy. Thus the régime, both officially and unofficially, tied Iran's national development and foreign policy objectives to the interests of the West, which ensured Iran's "dependence relationship" with the United States.[52] In this relationship, Washington acted as a "Patron Power", preserving the Shah's régime and influencing the direction and the content of its policies in line with western regional and international interests. Iran was largely subjected to the rôle of a dependent ally, increasingly susceptible to American dictates. All this confirmed Iran's opposition to communism and radical Arab nationalism, at the cost of its past policy of non-alignment and opposition to any type of foreign domination. The Shah served as the bridgehead in the process of this transformation of Iran's position. He declared, in December 1954, that "Iran has a great deal in common, in conviction, with the Western world (particularly the United States) regarding freedom and democracy. The way of life of the Western world fits in with our scheme of Islamic values."[53] He subsequently declared that "Westernization is our ideal", that Iran's interests

[50] For the text see Magnus, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–5. [51] Saikal, p. 57. [52] *Ibid.*
[53] *New York Times*, 15 December 1954.

were best served in alliance with the West, and that his régime was determined to combat "internal communism" or "the new totalitarian imperialism" inspired by Moscow in order to build a modern, strong Iran, replete with "social justice".[54]

In return for Iran's dependence on the United States and alliance with the West, the Shah expected the consolidation of his rule. Extensive American support enabled him to manipulate the nation in favour of his régime. He centralized politics to an unprecedented degree around the monarchy, repressed domestic opposition, and rearranged Iran's national objectives in favour of his régime. He succeeded in personally formulating a foreign policy that suited both his domestic policy and, initially, his dependence on the United States. Although, at first, the Iranian Foreign Ministry played a rôle in advising on foreign policy, he soon reduced its rôle to that of a policy-implementing body, and decided major foreign policy issues himself, with some assistance from a foreign affairs group he created within the Ministry of Court, the latter being an informal, but effective, government within a government, headed by a succession of loyal Court Ministers. In contrast to the uncertainties and lack of clear direction in Iran's foreign affairs during the 1940s and Muṣaddiq's premiership, the Shah built and enforced a structured, though dependent, foreign policy. This position gave a consistency to Iran's dependence on the U.S. and the West, and to its responses to the changing international environment of the 1950s. He attributed this to his régime's policy of "positive nationalism", stressing Iran's reliance on exclusive alliance with the West, and friendship with the countries of the region that shared his firm opposition to communism and Arab radicalism.[55]

While helping the Shah to establish his absolute rule, and Washington to secure an ally in a vital region, the Shah's foreign policy did not prove beneficial for either side in the long run. It antagonized the Soviet Union, which perceived Iran's pro-Western policies, especially within the Baghdad Pact and C.E.N.T.O., and its military treaty with the United States, as a serious blow to Soviet regional security and interests. In denouncing the regional pact, Moscow warned Tehran that its membership was "incompatible with Iran's neighbourly relations with the Soviet Union and the known treaty obligations of Iran". With regard to the military treaty, Premier Khrushchev stressed that it would convert Iran into an American military base, enabling Washington to install missiles on the Soviet border.[56] Despite these outbursts, however, Moscow was careful not

[54] Pahlavi, *op. cit.*, pp. 125, 130–60. [55] See *Ibid.*, Ch. 6.

[56] Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Documents on International Affairs, 1959* (London 1962), p. 305.

to sever all its links, particularly diplomatic relations, with Iran, fearing that this would push the Shah's regime further into the Western camp. For its part, Tehran was interested in maintaining a relationship of some sort with Moscow. Nonetheless, relations between the two states continued to deteriorate throughout the 1950s.

This coincided with the worsening of Tehran's relations with the Arab world, particularly the growing radical Arab forces, led by President Nāṣir of Egypt. The latter's enthusiasm for revolutionary Arab nationalism, and Pan-Arabism against Zionism, colonialism, imperialism and pro-Western conservatism in the region, left him opposed to the Shah's régime. President Nāṣir's condemnation, supported by the new revolutionary regime in Iraq, of the Shah's alliance with the West and his *de facto* recognition of the State of Israel, resulted not only in the breakdown of diplomatic relations between Cairo and Tehran in 1960,[57] but in a reluctance on the part of the pro-Western Arab states, led by Saudi Arabia, to strengthen their ties with the Shah's régime for fear of possible reprisals. Moreover, certain other *non*-Arab countries of the region, such as Afghanistan and India, which had adopted non-aligned positions in world politics, also had reason to be suspicious of the Shah's régime; Afghanistan had border disputes with Iran, and Iran's regional ally, Pakistan, and India were engaged in a struggle over Kashmir.

This growing regional isolation was complicated by the fact that the Shah's foreign policy meant that he had always to be mindful of U.S. wishes and shifts in the policies of the West. This situation became such that, in 1961, the Shah was not allowed to choose his own prime minister, but had to accept Washington's choice of ʿAlī Amīnī, Iran's former Ambassador to the U.S. The Kennedy administration considered Amīnī more capable than the Shah of shaping Iran to America's liking.[58] Given the widespread domestic and regional discontent with his régime, the Shah was powerless against Washington's directives. The Shah's realization of this made him aware, by the start of the 1960s, that he needed to make certain changes in his foreign policy. It was clear that he could not do this without first trying to widen his domestic power base. Like Washington, he recognized the need to initiate a number of social and economic reforms, although he was at first reluctant to agree with Washington's assessment of the urgency of such reforms.

The Shah took over a reform programme which prime minister ʿAlī Amīnī had initiated with Washington's support; on 26 January 1963, he launched what

[57] See address by President Gamal ʿAbd al-Nāṣir, Cairo, 22 February 1966, p. 27.
[58] *Kayhan International*, 22 October 1977 and 5 November 1977.

he called "The White Revolution", subsequently known as "the Revolution of the Shah and the People". The Revolution was to encompass a wide range of innovative changes affecting the whole spectrum of life in Iran. The Shah visualized this in terms of democracy and Westernization, for social justice, self-sufficiency and political and economic independence, in putative accord with Islamic values. The reforms involved land redistribution and industrial, educational and administrative "revolution".[59] No matter how fruitless the White Revolution reforms were for the Iranian people, the Shah reaped a number of short-term political gains from them. While maintaining his position in Iranian politics, by the late 1960s, he "had generated a process of controlled mass mobilization and opened up new bases of support among peasants, industrial workers, women, and youth, and among those intellectuals, professionals, technocrats, and bureaucrats who had previously been unhappy with his régime for other than ideological reasons. He had stimulated a higher degree of economic activity, which, together with his mass mobilization, improved the prospects for immediate social and economic stability, and raised the people's hopes for a better future. Iran's middle class grew more quickly than before – a feature necessary for the Shah's régime in pursuing a guided capitalist mode of socio-economic development."[60]

This, together with Iran's growing income from oil, helped the Shah to improve his régime's domestic image. Together with these improvements, the Shah had grounds for initiating and pursuing certain changes in his foreign policy in support of the White Revolution's goal of a "national independent foreign policy". He declared, "non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and peaceful coexistence" to be the essential principles of this policy. He stressed: "We must . . . convert peaceful coexistence into international co-operation and understanding especially to countries with different political and social systems from ours . . . the establishment of understanding and peace cannot be achieved without sincere respect for the principle of coexistence between different ideologies and systems of government, or without respect for the principle of non-interference of countries in the internal affairs of others."[61]

The Shah therefore sought the normalization of Iran's relations with the Soviet Union at government level, while still opposing communism. Following his assurance to the Soviet leadership, in 1962, that he would not permit any foreign power to have military bases in Iran able to threaten the Soviet Union, he moved to redress one of the underlying causes of Soviet displeasure, Iran's

[59] See Saikal, pp. 79–83. [60] *Ibid.*, p. 91. [61] Pahlavi, *White Revolution*, pp. 173–4.

membership of C.E.N.T.O. While he had hitherto concentrated on the aspect of C.E.N.T.O. as a defensive pact, he now stressed the organization's economic importance. Since it had become clear that C.E.N.T.O. had not been set up to help solve regional disputes, and that a direct Soviet threat was not imminent, C.E.N.T.O.'s members formed the Regional Co-operation for Development (R.C.D.), in July 1964. The latter was to be an adjunct to C.E.N.T.O. in expanding "the field of mutual co-operation into those areas where the C.E.N.T.O. alliance had not been effective".[62] The founding members, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, originally hoped that Afghanistan and other states of the region, excluding the U.S.S.R., would join R.C.D., but this was not to be. In the meantime, in the light of Iran's growing income from oil, and Washington's confidence that Iran was committed to the West, the Johnson administration classified Iran as a "developed" country in 1965 and announced its intention to end American grant-in-aid by November 1967. Since this decision did not affect Iran's special relationship with the United States, the Shah found it helpful in normalizing relations with Moscow.

These developments were pleasing to the Kremlin, which realized that only a domestically and regionally secure Iran could reduce its dependence on the United States. Soviet desires to gain access to Iranian natural resources, especially natural gas, to improve its regional ties, and to manifest a general image of "friendship" with Afro-Asian countries, made the Kremlin more receptive to the Shah's gestures. This resulted in the conclusion of two major economic and military agreements between Iran and the Soviet Union. Under the economic agreement, signed in January 1966, Iran undertook to supply the U.S.S.R. with more than $600 million worth of natural gas, beginning in 1970, in return for the U.S.S.R.'s building Iran's first large steel complex in Iṣfahān, a machine-tool plant in Shīrāz, and a pipeline from northern Iran to the Caucasus. Under the military agreement, initiated in February 1967, Moscow agreed to supply Iran with some $110 million worth of light arms in return for the natural gas.[63]

The agreements marked a turning point in Iranian–Soviet relations. The improved ties with the Soviet Union provided the Shah with a new source of technical assistance and bargaining power with the West. It also strengthened his position against Cairo and Arab radical forces in the region, strengthened his image with Afghanistan and India, which had developed close ties with the U.S.S.R., and reduced the chances of co-operation between his domestic opposition and hostile regional forces. By the end of the 1960s, the Shah was

[62] Quoted in Asopa, p. 136. [63] Hunter, p. 7; *Washington Post*, 8 February 1967.

thereby in a stronger position to conduct Iran's external affairs with greater independence.

He was also able to participate in the "O.P.E.C. revolution", to challenge the international oil companies' monopoly of the Iranian oil industry to realize the country's potential as an "oil power". Although the Shah had supported Muṣaddiq's oil nationalization plans, he had disapproved of his "revolutionary" method of achieving that objective. While accepting the American solution to the oil crisis, he was conscious that that solution was far short of what Muṣaddiq had wanted to obtain for Iran. He adopted a gradual approach to gaining control over Iran's oil. This conformed with his alliance with the West at a time when the international oil companies still controlled Middle Eastern oil industries and the regional producers were weak and divided. As changes in global politics and the world oil market allowed, Iran set out in the early 1970s fully to exploit O.P.E.C.'s collective strength against the weakening position of the oil companies. The Shah played a determining rôle in leading O.P.E.C. to a policy of "price rise, price and production control", between 1970 and 1975. He made use of every development, including the Arab–Israeli war of 1973 and the consequent Arab oil embargo, to realise the new policy, posing as the champion of the oil producers and of the Third World against "domination and exploitation".[64]

By 1974, the Shah had substantially achieved Muṣaddiq's aims of Iranian control and had realized Iran's potential as an oil power. This brought the Shah's régime unprecedented wealth and diplomatic strength, with increasing influence in regional and world politics. Industrialized countries found themselves more dependent than ever before on Iranian oil, given the militancy and "unreliability" of the Arab producers. They found it expedient to acknowledge the position of the Shah, and set out to win his favour in order to secure the recycling of oil revenue to the West.

This occurred against the background of other developments. In the late 1960s, Britain announced that, by the end of 1971, as part of its overall withdrawal from East of Suez, it would pull out its forces from the Persian Gulf, which had been under British protection for over a century. Secondly, there was an increase in the activities of revolutionary groups in the Persian Gulf. The most active and publicized of these was the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Arab Gulf (P.F.L.O.A.G.). This group, opposed to the pro-Western governments of the Gulf, had turned Dhofar, the southern-most province of the Sultanate of Oman, into a centre of revolutionary activity, challenging the

[64] For detailed discussion see Saikal, Ch. 4.

authority of the Omani government.[65] Thirdly, the border dispute between Iran and Iraq over the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab waterway, and their ideological differences, had resulted in a number of frontier clashes.[66] Meanwhile, Iran's C.E.N.T.O. ally, Pakistan, was weakened as the country's eastern flank seceded with full Indian military support in 1971, to form Bangladesh. This development encouraged the Baluchi and Pushtoon movements, backed by Afghanistan, to intensify their demand for independence or autonomy in Pakistan's Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Provinces.[67] These developments were accompanied by Moscow's growing friendship with India, Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and the P.D.R.Y., to which Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique were soon to be added; and by sporadic but increasing acts of urban terrorism against the Shah's régime within Iran, acts which the Shah attributed to the growth of religious and leftist opposition to his rule, from what he called "Islamic Marxists".[68]

The Shah could neither overlook these developments, nor avoid perceiving them on the basis of his own interests and understanding of the region. With the growing significance of the Persian Gulf, which provided Iran with its best outlet for exports, particularly oil, through the strategically located Strait of Hurmuz, the Shah agreed with London and Washington that the intended British withdrawal from the Gulf might create a power vacuum, which the Soviets and radical Arabs might fill unless Iran were prepared to take over some of the formerly British rôle. Moreover, the Shah could not help but see the hand of Moscow and its allies in the disturbances which increasingly threatened the stability of Iran and the region.

The Shah therefore re-evaluated Iran's regional position. He set out to transform Iran into a regional power. This was understandable in the light of his vastly expanded oil-based financial and political power, and Washington's desire to apply the "Nixon Doctrine" to Iran. This doctrine, coming in the wake of America's humiliation in Indo-China was "to construct a world system in which the United States, the central power, would help generate strong regional actors, who would secure their own and American interests in their respective regions".[69] The Shah resolved to achieve several objectives. Iran was to take

[65] See S. Chubin and M. Fard-Saidi, "Recent Trends in Middle East Politics and Iran's Foreign Policy Options".

[66] Raoof, "Confrontation and Détente in the Arabian-Persian Gulf: The Case of Iraq" and R.M. Burrell and A.J. Cottrell, "Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan", pp. 2–17.

[67] Burrell and Cottrell, *ibid.*, pp. 7–9.

[68] Chubin, "Iran: Between the Arab West and the Asian East".

[69] See "United States' Foreign Policy for the 1970s: A New Strategy for Peace" in the weekly compilation of Presidential documents, Monday, 23 February 1970; Landan, p. 120; Saikal, p. 205.

over Britain's rôle as the regional power in the Persian Gulf after its withdrawal, and resist any attempt by outside powers, especially the Soviet Union, to replace Britain. The Shah considered this essential for the security of Iran and the Gulf against foreign or regionally sponsored subversion; for ensuring uninterrupted passage through the Strait of Hurmuz, the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab, and the Gulf as a whole; for protecting Iranian oil resources and facilities on- and off-shore in the Gulf against sabotage or destruction; and for boosting the psychological stability of the smaller Gulf states, which in the past had relied upon Britain against threats in the region. Iran was to continue to pursue an anti-communist policy, since it needed to continue to strengthen its national defences in convergence with Western interests, against possible direct or indirect hostile Soviet action. However, this did not have to undermine good relations with the U.S.S.R. Nevertheless, Iran had to acquire the capability to deter the rise of any Soviet-backed or leftist force in the region, south and south-east of its borders. It had to conduct balanced relations with all friendly or potentially friendly countries of the region. These countries comprised, on the one hand, the moderate and conservative Arab states, including Egypt under President Anwar al-Sadat, who succeeded Nāṣir following the latter's death in 1970, and had set out to disentangle Egypt from the tentacles of the U.S.S.R. in the hope of securing better ties with the U.S. and peace with Israel; and on the other, Iran's weak regional ally, Pakistan, as well as Afghanistan and India. With regard to the last three, in the process of balancing relations, Iran sought to strengthen its alliance with Pakistan; to support it against further dismemberment; to mediate between Pakistan and its neighbours; and to help Afghanistan and Pakistan reduce their dependence on Soviet aid.[70]

By the early 1970s, the Shah defined the Iranian region of interest well beyond the geographical perimeters of West and Central Asia and the Persian Gulf; "I will not state how many kilometres we have in mind, but anyone who is acquainted with geography and the strategic situation, and especially with the potential of air and sea forces, knows what distance from Chāh Bahār this limit can reach."[71] He set out to turn Iran, as rapidly as possible, into a paramount regional power, capable of maintaining the regional status quo in accordance with Iran's changing interests, in pursuance of what the Shah later declared to be his ultimate goal: *Tamaddun-i Buzurg* (The Great Civilization).[72] He therefore

[70] R.K. Ramazani, "Emerging Patterns of Regional Relations in Iranian Foreign Policy", *Orbis* XVII (Winter 1975), pp. 1043–70.

[71] The Shah's speech, *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts* (SWB), 9 November 1972, ME/4140.

[72] See Pahlavī, *Bi-sū-yi Tamaddun-i Buzurg*.

intensified his efforts, on the basis of Iran's increasing oil wealth, and with the full support of the United States' Nixon Doctrine, and the West's desire to recycle oil revenues, to build up Iran's military and economic capabilities, thereby substantiating Iran's claim to be a military power. In May 1972, President Nixon assured the Shah that the United States would sell him anything short of nuclear weapons.[73] The Shah engaged in intensive diplomacy to ensure that Iranian oil revenues secured the maximum of capital goods, expertise, technology and sophisticated weaponry, and to sell Iranian products abroad on the best possible terms. He gave aid to countries that would help him secure his political ends, and attempted to gain the backing of influential individuals, organizations and governments to improve international perception of his leadership.

The Shah increased state expenditure in accordance with increases in Iranian oil revenue, and undertook accelerated industrialization in the hope of eventually creating a non-oil-based, self-sufficient economy, since he estimated that Iranian oil would be exhausted by the end of the century. He ordered revision of Iran's Fifth Economic Development Plan (1973–8), which took effect in late 1974. He declared that this would be "equal to all four previous plans combined". He promised that, by the end of the Fifth Plan, Iran "will be in a quite distinguished and unprecedented position", leading the country to the threshold of the "Great Civilization". He declared that the overall objective of the Plan was "to achieve a stage at which the Iranian society, enjoying utmost privileges of social and economic development, could be transferred into a strong . . . and most advanced [industrial society] of modern times".[74]

The Shah planned that the industrial development of Iran be coupled with the emergence of the country as a military power. He stated that, "In view of the regional and international problems, the strengthening and consolidation of the country's defence power [should] enjoy special priority . . . so that it should act as the main factor in safeguarding the country's stability and independence, maintaining the precious fruits of economic and social expansion and securing Iran, as before, as an area of peace and reliance in today's turbulent world".[75] He therefore embarked on a multi-billion dollar programme to build one of the most impressive military forces in the region, aspiring that Iran would become the world's fifth conventional military power by the end of the 1980s. As a U.S. Congressional Staff Report stated, in July 1976, "upon delivery between now

[73] U.S. Congress Sub Committee on Foreign Assistance. Staff Report. *U.S. Military Sales to Iran, July, 1976* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1976), p. 5. See also Rubin, Ch. 6.
[74] The Shah's speech, *BBC SWB*, 13 August 1974, ME/W788. [75] *Ibid.*

and 1981 of equipment ordered to date, Iran, on paper, can be regarded as a regional super-power".[76]

Although the Shah sought to undertake his economic and military drive with equipment from various sources, including the Soviet Union, the United States remained the major supplier. "Under the agreement [of August 1976] trade between the two sides was to rise from $10,000 million between 1974 and 1976 to $40,000 million during 1976–1980; and their military trade, which had totalled about $10,000 million between 1973 and 1976, was to be extended by another $15,000 million during the same period." In November 1977, President Carter pledged himself to support the Shah, and praised him as a "strong leader", and Iran as "a stabilizing force in the world at large".[77]

Although Iran's regional policy lacked a *definite* pattern, it manifested two consistent concerns: the Shah's persistance with what he called "regional co-operation", and his opposition to what he perceived as "communist-subversive" forces within Iran and the region. The Shah sought to use the *former* to acquire consensus in support of the *latter*, which resulted in Iranian military intervention in the region.

He also sought to settle some of Iran's disputes with its neighbours and use oil wealth to offer capital aid, in return for the opening of new sources of raw materials and markets for Iranian products. He hoped to expand the concept of the Regional Co-operation for Development to form a "common market". He succeeded in resolving several disputes. Following the trilateral settlement between Iran, Britain and the U.N. of the Baḥrain problem, which entailed Iran's abandoning its traditional claim to this British protectorate in 1969, an act of self-determination by the Baḥraini people, under U.N. auspices in 1970, resulted in the independence of the island.[78] The Shah also resolved some territorial and off-shore differences with the Persian Gulf's littoral Arab states, a border difference with Afghanistan, and the long-standing border dispute, chiefly over the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab, with Iraq. In the latter case, the Shah used his economic and military power and diplomatic skill to induce the Iraqi régime to sign an agreement in March 1975. The agreement provided for joint control of the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab and demarcation of land frontiers, and called on the two sides to end their support for hostile groups against one another, including Iran's support of Iraq's Kurds. Both sides resolved to develop good relations in all fields, and agreed that the Persian Gulf be free from foreign intervention, an

[76] See *U.S. Military Sales to Iran, July 1976, op. cit.*, p. viii. [77] Saikal, p. 206.

[78] See H. Moghtader, "The Settlement of the Bahrain Question: A study in Anglo-Iranian-United Nations Diplomacy".

issue stressed by the Shah and affirmed by Iraq.[79] The Shah also stepped up his efforts for mediation between Pakistan and its neighbours, Afghanistan and India, in their border disputes, and promised financial aid to all three countries.[80] Since Egypt's position had changed under President Sadat, the Shah developed close ties with that country in support of a common anti-communist perspective, and also provided, or promised, aid to Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Morocco and the Sudan. In 1974, he suggested that the nations from Australia to the Gulf Arab states should join Iran in forming a "common market". Under pressure from India, he subsequently limited his notion of the market to the Gulf and Iran's eastern flank, but the scheme never materialized.[81]

The Shah was never specific in his stance against communism and subversion. He considered all those who opposed his objectives, whether for religious, ideological, or pragmatic reasons, as subversive. He took a resolute stand against the opposition at home, and engaged in a number of limited military adventures in the region. These included the occupation of the islands of the Great and Small Tumbs; and the acquisition of Abū Mūsā in the Persian Gulf at the Strait of Hurmuz, shortly before the British withdrawal in 1971, since he considered that the strategic location of these islands might enable a subversive force to block the Strait of Hurmuz, if undefended by Iran; the deployment of some 3,000 Iranian troops in Oman from 1972, which, by 1977, succeeded in suppressing the P.F.L.O.A.G.; military assistance to Ẕuʾl-Fiqār ʿAlī Bhutto's government in Pakistan from 1971 to 1977 against the Baluchi and Pushtoon resistance movements seeking autonomy; and to Muḥammad Said Barre's government in Somalia which, in 1977, loosened its ties with the U.S.S.R. and sought aid from the West against the new Soviet-backed Marxist-Leninist government in Ethiopia. In the hope of building a formal framework for his anti-subversion policy, he even proposed the formation of a regional "collective security" arrangement in the Gulf.[82]

However, his drive to transform Iran into a formidable policing and deterrent power was over-ambitious and short-sighted. He had to rely on western countries, particularly the United States, for key resources, especially expertise and arms. By 1977, it was clear that the Shah's economic and military programmes faced difficulties in meeting their targets. His economic efforts and selective social reforms had failed to generate the necessary base for the success of his military build-up, while the latter had taken a heavy toll on Iran's development. His regional policies of "co-operation" and "anti-subversion"

[79] Cottrell, pp. 13–15. [80] Saikal, pp. 171–6.
[81] *Ibid.*, pp. 175–6; *Kayhan International*, 5 October 1974. [82] Saikal, pp. 176–81.

were undermined by his claim to economic and military supremacy, which few states of the region accepted. Nor did they welcome his proposals for a regional "common market" and arrangements for "collective security", which they saw Iran as keen to dominate. While his policies of economic, industrial and military build-up caused imbalance inside Iran, they made other states, particularly the oil producers and India, question the Shah's motives. This resulted in a regional arms race. The fall of the Afghan government of Muḥammad Dāʾūd in a pro-Moscow communist coup in April 1978 also showed the failure of the Shah's regional anti-communist policy. By the time that mass opposition threatened the Shah's rule, all that he could claim was to be a "dependent regional power", a "power that achieved certain economic and military capabilities based on oil income, but that lacked the self-generating potential to sustain itself and function effectively without heavy long-term reliance on the United States".[83] Even this was not sufficient, and the Shah was rejected in 1978 by his own people, as a "stooge" of the United States, placed and sustained in power by Americans, and an "enemy" of the Iranian people. In the face of this uprising, which the Shah's military forces were unable, and ultimately unwilling, to quell, Washington could do nothing but abandon its support for the Shah, and reflect bitterly on events. The Shah was forced to leave Tehran on 16 January 1979, for exile abroad. His opponent Āyatullāh Khumainī returned, after 14 years of exile, to put an end to the Persian monarchy and establish the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[83] *Ibid.*, p. 208.

PART 3: ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS

CHAPTER 13

LAND TENURE AND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The Qājār land system was inherited from the Safavids and goes back through the Īlkhāns and Saljūqs to the early centuries of Islam. The earlier systems had resulted from the historical incidents of conquest and had been moulded by local custom and the theory of the *sharīʿa*. This was also to some extent true of the Qājār system, but though there was a correspondence between it and the earlier systems there was not necessarily identity between them. Although abuses similar to those found in Western European feudalism, such as the existence of private armies and the subjection of the peasantry, were associated with the Qājār land system, and although there was a close connection between the revenue assessment and the levy of troops, it was not, in the technical sense, a feudal system, and nor had it developed out of a feudal system. It is to be seen not only in relation to the idea of property but also against the background of demographic movements and economic change.

The urban life and extensive commerce which had developed under the Safavids had been severely damaged by the disorders which had followed the fall of that dynasty. Agriculture suffered from the general recession of the eighteenth century and was probably also adversely affected by the depopulation which occurred in some parts of the country at the time of the Afghan invasion and in the latter years of Nādir Shāh. The nineteenth century witnessed a reversal of these trends, but the revival was not uniform throughout the country or throughout the century. Lack of communications continued to impede the movement of goods and to accentuate regional isolation.

The sharīʿa recognizes the right of property to rest upon two types of appropriation: the first that of individuals, expressed in the phrase *al-nās musallaṭun ʿalā amwālihim*,[1] and the second that of the Muslim community, which derived from conquest. It recognizes also the right of alienation and the fact that various rights and easements can be exercised over property or may accrue to

[1] "Men are in control of their possessions." This phrase is used by al-Shāfiʿī and other jurists after him. Cf. also the phrase *man qutila dūn mālihi fa huwa shahīd* (al-Suyūṭī, *al-Jāmiʿ al-ṣaghīr* II, p. 435), "he who is killed in defence of his property is a martyr".

individuals from its possession. Shaikh Jaʿfar Kāshif al-Ghiṭāʾ (d. 1812), the well known Ithnā-ʿAsharī jurist, asserts the sanctity of private property in his work *Kashf al-ghiṭāʾ*, in which he states "the property of a Muslim, and not only the property of a Muslim, but all property, such as the lawful property of an infidel, is sacred and immune".[2] He also states "No one has any power over the property of another."[3]

Perhaps because it was tacitly assumed that Muslim property rested largely on the right of conquest, the jurists, whether Sunnī or Shīʿī, discuss the classification of land and the taxes which were levied upon it, namely *ʿushr* (tithe) and *kharāj*, primarily in those sections of their works which are devoted to *jihād*, though the fiscal and financial obligations which derive from the ownership and exploitation of land are also mentioned under *zakāt* and *tijārat* (trade). Many treatises were written on kharāj and the various interpretations put upon it by the jurists, both Sunnī and Shīʿī. All regarded it as a *sharʿī* obligation due on land to which the conditions of kharāj applied. Hence the first task was to establish the tenure of the land. This involved at all periods, including the nineteenth century, reference to the early conquests and the works of former jurists.

The Ithnā-ʿAsharī jurist, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī (385–460/995–1067–8), whose exposition forms the basis for the work of many later Shīʿī writers, recognizes four kinds of land:

(i) land left in the possession of its inhabitants who had, of their own accord, accepted Islam: such land paid *ʿushr* (tithe) or *nīm ʿushr* (half tithe). It remained their property and they had the right to buy and sell it, to constitute it into *vaqf*, and, provided that they cultivated it, to exercise every kind of possession over it. If they ceased to cultivate it and abandoned it so that it fell out of cultivation, it became the property of the Muslim community, and it was for the *imām* to give it to someone who would undertake its cultivation, paying half, one third or one quarter of its produce as a rent, and *ʿushr* or *nīm ʿushr* to the treasury after he had deducted the rent and the expenses of cultivation.

(ii) Land conquered by the sword, *kharāj* land: this belonged to the Muslim community. It was for the *imām*, or that person who was in charge of the affairs of the Muslims, to give it, as he saw fit, to someone who would undertake its cultivation, paying as a rent to the treasury half, one third or one quarter of its produce, and *ʿushr* or *nīm ʿushr* on what remained to him

[2] Lith., n.d. (pages unnumbered), see section on *Uṣūl al-fiqh, al-baḥth al-arbaʿūn*.
[3] *Ibid., al-baḥth al-thānī waʾl-arbaʿūn*.

after that. Such land could not be bought or sold, made into private property, or constituted into *vaqf*, or given as a gift by way of *ṣadaqa*. On expiry of the agreement, the *imām* had the right to transfer the property to someone else. It was for the *imām* to take possession of it as the interests of the Muslims demanded. Such land belonged to all the Muslims and its usufruct was to be divided among them.

(iii) Land held by *ẓimmī*s, who had made a *ṣulḥ* agreement (i.e. a treaty of capitulation) with the *imām*, according to which they paid one half, one quarter, or some other fraction of its produce to the treasury. The holders of such land exercised full rights of possession over the land. When the *ṣulḥ* agreement expired, it was for the *imām* to increase or decrease the payment made. If a Muslim bought such land, it became his property and he exercised over it full rights of possession and ownership.

(iv) *Anfāl*, i.e. all land which had been abandoned by its owners or become dead land and been revived, forest land, land which had been newly brought into cultivation, land on the tops of mountains, river-beds, mines, and the crown lands of former rulers – all these belonged to the *imām*. It was for him to take possession of them, to keep them, give them away, or sell them as he saw fit, and to impose upon them half, one third or one quarter of the produce as rent. When the term of the agreement expired, he could take them away from the holder and give them to someone else, except in the case of dead land which had been revived, when the one who revived it had priority. Should the latter be unwilling to continue its cultivation, it was for the *imām* to give it to whomsoever he saw fit, such person then being responsible for the payment of *ᶜushr* or *nīm ᶜushr*, after the deduction of the rent payable to the person who had revived the land and the costs of cultivation. In the case of dead land, the owner of which was known, it was incumbent upon the person who revived it to pay the rent to the owner, who could not deprive him of the land as long as he wished to cultivate it. If the land had no owner, it belonged to the *imām* and it was incumbent upon the person who revived it to pay rent to the *imām*, who could only take it away from him and give it to another in the event of his failing to cultivate it. The person who revived the land could sell his right of possession (*taṣarruf*) but not the land itself (*ruqba-i ẓamīn*)[4].

[4] *Al-Nihāya fī'l-mujarrad al-fiqh wa'l-fatāwā* I, pp. 130–1, 195–6, II, pp. 283–4. See also al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī, *Mukhtaṣar al-nāfiᶜ* on the regulations for conquered lands in the section on *jihād* (pp. 144–5). This follows *al-Nihāya* but is less full.

The fact that none of the Ithna-ʿAsharī Shīʿī *imāms*, with the exception of ʿAlī, the first Imam, had held political power and that during the occultation (*ghaiba*) all government was regarded as "unjust" (see pp. 711ff.), limited the operation of these laws. Faced with the problem of whether to co-operate with an "unrighteous" government, the general body of believers, admitting that coercive government was necessary, held that in ordinary circumstances collaboration was incumbent upon believers. Life had to go on and livelihood and property had to be protected, and so in general terms the rule of the *de facto* holder of power was accepted. Further, it was held that the duty to pay kharāj, since it was a sharʿī obligation, did not lapse when the ruler was illegitimate.

With the rise of the Safavids in the 10th/16th century, when the Ithna-ʿAsharī Shīʿa formed a political organization, the question of the tenure of the land and the levy and expenditure of kharāj acquired a new urgency and bitter controversies occurred among the ʿ*ulamā*. Shaikh ʿAlī b. Ḥusain b. ʿAbd al-ʿĀlī al-Karakī in his treatise entitled *Qāṭiʿ at al-lajāj fī ḥill al-kharāj*, written in 916/1510–11, held that permission was given by the Imams to their *shīʿa*, i.e. their followers, to take possession of ʿ*anwā* land during the ghaiba and to exercise over it rights of ownership and disposal. Shaikh Mājid b. Falāḥ al-Shaibānī, writing rather later, is explicit on this point and states that all land bought or inherited belonged during the ghaiba to those who held it.

Al-Karakī affirms that in the ghaiba the Imam permitted their shīʿa to receive kharāj from unjust rulers (*salāṭīn al-jaur*). After a detailed discussion of the early conquests, the tenure of conquered lands, the levy of kharāj and the expenditure of its proceeds, he states that the purposes on which the proceeds of kharāj were expended, namely the allowances of fighters for the faith, governors, judges and others charged with public office, were not suspended during the ghaiba. Further, the duty of those who worked the land of the Muslims to pay kharāj did not lapse; it was to be paid into the public treasury (*bait al-māl*), to the revenues of which the Muslims had a right. He also maintains that kharāj land could be alienated and that those to whom it had been alienated could dispose of it by sale or gift, make it into vaqf or transmit it by inheritance. Kharāj was thus legal even if collected by an unjust ruler and money deriving from kharāj could be accepted by believers.

Ibrāhīm al-Qaṭīfī, on the other hand, was uncompromizing in his rejection of the legality of kharāj during the ghaiba. In his refutation of al-Karakī's work, entitled *al-Sirāj al-wahhāj li-dafʿ ʿajaj qāṭiʿat al-lajāj fī ḥill al-kharāj*, which was completed in 942/1535–6, he maintains that land which had been held by the Imam passed into private ownership during the ghaiba. What was levied on it

was therefore not legally kharāj even though it might be collected by the bait al-māl as kharāj. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Ardabīlī (d. 993/1585) also held that kharāj was illegal during the ghaiba.[5]

Although treatises on these subjects continued to be written in later centuries, no major changes are to be found in either the classification of the land or its taxation. It would seem that a consensus was reached among the ʿulamā that kharāj was legal. Shaikh Jaʿfar, who deals fully with land laws under jihād, following the same general lines as Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ṭūsī, concedes the possibility of action by the holder of power during the occultation of the Imam and so implicitly extends the operation of these laws to later periods when power was in the hands of "unrighteous" rulers. Towards the end of sub-section three in section nine on jihād he states,

If land in Arabia, Persia, India or elsewhere was in Muslim hands, and on which their amīrs had imposed *kharāj*, it was to be treated as land conquered by force and its produce was to be spent on the well-being of the Muslims, whether it had been conquered by "the people of truth" among the Muslims [i.e. the Shīʿa] or by the people of corruption [i.e. Muslims who were not Shīʿī] in the time of the *imām* or during the occultation. If the writ of one of the successors [caliphs] of the prophet (upon him and his family be peace) ran, he, or the deputy he appointed over the matter, had authority over the land to give it as a *qabāla*,[6] to lease it, or to make it free to whomsoever he wished and to expend its revenue on the wellbeing of the Muslims . . . If the caliph's writ does not run, the *nāʾib al-ʿāmm* from among the great *ʿulamā* will exercise authority in this matter. It is not permitted to anyone to take possession [of the land] except with his permission so long as he exercises this authority and reference to him is easy. Otherwise authority is vested in the Muslim governors who assemble militia and soldiers who know how to defend Muslim territory and the Muslims, and they [the Muslim governors] will lease it or give it as a *qabāla* to whomsoever they will and spend its revenue on soldiers and militia who protect Islamic territory and the roads of the Muslims and prevent aggression against them by tyrants. It is not permitted to take possession of this land except with his [the Muslim governor's] permission.

Finally Shaikh Jaʿfar states:

And in this time it is not permitted to anyone to exercise possession [*taṣarruf*] [of land conquered by force] during the time of the occultation except by the permission of the *mujtahid*s, provided there is no *sulṭān* whose attention is directed towards the well-being of the affairs of the Muslims – but if such a one exists it is forbidden to exercise possession

[5] The *risāla*s of al-Karakī, al-Qaṭīfī, Mājid b. Falāḥ al-Shaibānī and Aḥmad al-Ardabīlī are to be found in the collection *al-Riẓāʿiyyāt wa'l-kharājiyyāt* (Tehran, 1315/1897–8). See also Lambton, *State and government in medieval Islam*, pp. 271ff.

[6] A contract under which a local notable or other person guaranteed the payment to the treasury at the required time of the full amount of the land-tax due from a given locality (see further *Ḳabāla*, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, IV (Leiden, 1978), pp. 323–4.).

without his permission. And whoever is seen to have some landed estates [*amlāk*] in his possession and there is a presumption that he may be their owner, they will be considered as his property.[7]

It is possible that the theory that the Shah was the ultimate owner of the land (see further below) may have developed out of this recognition by the jurists that the rights of the Imam with regard to certain classes of land were exercised by the holders of temporal power. In any case, from the fact that the jurists recognized the validity of action by the holders of temporal power in matters concerning the land, it followed that the theory of the sharīʿa would continue to play a part, even if a somewhat uneasy one, and would continue to influence the classification of the land and the basic rates of taxation. Further, the possibility always remained of reactivating the theory, so far as it had fallen into abeyance. Thus, during the reign of the Afghan Maḥmūd, who overthrew the Safavids in 1722, a *fatvā* was issued declaring that the kingdom had been taken by force and therefore belonged to the bait al-māl.[8]

It is more difficult to determine what was the position with regard to the right of property under local custom. This differed from place to place, particularly in tribal districts, where customary law tended to be stronger than elsewhere.[9] Whatever its influence in practice, custom could not, by the nature of the case, be seen as a rival to the religious law, and so there is no written body of material upon which to draw, nor can it be assumed that what prevailed in one district necessarily held good in another. The pre-eminence of the sharīʿa was not disputed, however much it might be contravened in practice. Malcolm has an interesting passage which illustrates this. Discussing the situation of the king's officers, he states,

nor has he [the Shah] a right to seize or confiscate any property which their family possessed before they entered his service and which is guarded by legal titles, and has either been granted to, or purchased by them or their ancestors. Such property is under the peculiar protection of the Sherrah; and the violent seizure of it would be a most tyrannical outrage. However, it continually occurs, that, when the king imposes a heavy

[7] *Kashf al-ghiṭāʾ*, *Kitāb al-jihād al bāb al-tāsiʿ al-faṣl al-thālith.*

[8] Mīrzā Ḥasan Khān Shaikh Jābirī Anṣārī, *Tārīkh-i niṣf-i jahān va hama-i jahān*, p. 32, and *idem*, *Tārīkh-i Iṣfahān va Ray*, p. 35. Cf. also the tax system of Begī Jān, the ruler of Transoxiana (Malcolm, *History* II, pp. 164–5).

[9] Major (later Sir) Henry Rawlinson describing the situation among the Mukrī Kurds in Sāūj Bulāgh in or about 1838 states that the country had been acquired in war. It was originally held as direct property by the chief of the Bābā Amīra and descended from him to his family. The chief assigned the country as he pleased to the *āghās* (minor chiefs) with or without the consent of the proprietor ("Notes on a Journey from Tabrīz through Persian Kurdistan to the Ruins of Takhti-Soleïman, etc.", *J.R.G.S.* x (1841), pp. 35–6).

fine upon a minister or governor of a province, whom he deems a public delinquent, he adopts rigorous measures to enforce payment, till he compels him to sell his estates, of which government is usually the purchaser.[10]

Customary recognition of property rights did not of itself, any more than sharʿī recognition, ensure their maintenance. Governments, themselves originally established by force and conquest, so far as they maintained the rights of individual property only did so until another and stronger usurped them. The essentially arbitrary nature of kingship and of the activities of the king's officers resulted in the repeated reallocation and redistribution of land, not to say usurpation of title. The Qājār period was no exception to this. Supporters and favourites were rewarded by grants of land: opponents and defeated enemies were punished and weakened by the confiscation of their lands. Thus, Āghā Muḥammad Khān, after he had established his power, allowed the Türkmens among whom his father, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, had frequently taken refuge when in difficulty, to remove from the banks of the Atrak to the rich plain of Gurgān and gave them villages in *tuyūl* on the banks of the Qara Sū.[11] Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, in 1806, assigned to ʿAbd al-Raḥīm Pāshā, the governor of Bābān, who had been turned out by ʿAlī Pāshā, the *vālī* of Baghdād, and taken refuge at the Persian court, a district of Kurdistān where he and his 5,000 tribal followers and dependents might reside.[12] Some years later, after he had driven Muṣṭafā Khān Ṭālish, who had fought on the side of the Russians in 1812, out of Lankarān, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh distributed the whole of Persian Ṭālish among the remaining families, confirming to each such portions of the country as it had become possessed of and created them khans by way of increasing their importance, with a view to weakening the power of the family of Muṣṭafā Khān.[13]

It is conceivable that the Qājār rulers regarded their empire as having been taken by the sword – as indeed it was – and therefore as vesting in themselves, in the same way as land taken by the sword had belonged to the Muslim community, possession over it being exercised only "with the permission of that person who was charged with the supervision of the affairs of the Muslims [*bi dastūr-i ān kas ki nāẓir buvad dar kārhā-yi musalmānān*]".[14] J.B. Fraser, writing of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, states, "The throne having come into the hands of this family by conquest, he treats the whole country (except, perhaps, the seat of his own tribe in

[10] *History of Persia* II, p. 348.

[11] Rabino, p. 80. See below, pp. 488–95, for a discussion of the term *tuyūl*.

[12] ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Najaf Qulī, *The dynasty of the Kajars, translated from the . . . Ms presented . . . to Sir H.J. Brydges* [by Sir H.J. Brydges and David Shea] (London, 1833), p. 259.

[13] J.B. Fraser, *Travels and Adventures in the Persian Provinces on the Southern Banks of the Caspian Sea*, p. 145.

[14] Cf. al-Ṭūsī, *al-Nihāya fī'l-mujarrad al-fiqh* II, p. 283.

Mazandaran) like a conquered nation; and his only concern is how to extract from them the greatest possible amount of money."[15] No doctrine concerning the land other than the sharʿī doctrine, however, was clearly enunciated, and it would seem that the government was mainly interested in land from the fiscal rather than the tenurial point of view. There was, however, a curious episode in 1844. Muḥammad Shāh, on the occasion of disputes between the Persian government and the Russian government over the payment of debts by bankrupts to foreign subjects, issued a *farmān* dated Jumādā I 1260/May–June 1844 to Bahman Mīrzā, who at the time was governor of Āẕarbāījān. In this it was stated that three parties had a right to landed property in Persia, namely the royal diwan, the proprietor, and the cultivators, and that should the proprietor wish to mortgage his property, he must previously obtain permission from the other two parties.[16] This theory, however, does not appear to have been put forward in other contexts and so far as the cultivators were concerned there is little to show that they were generally regarded as having any right to the land as distinct from a right to the crops which they had planted.

E.B. Eastwick, writing in 1861, states that "it seems to have been the original idea in Persia, as in Turkey, that the fee-simple of all lands belonged to the king".[17] Major (later Sir) Percy Sykes, writing in 1910, also appears to have believed the government to be the real proprietor of all the land.[18] In the absence of any systematic doctrine, these statements must be accepted with reserve. At the same time, the fact that the ruler assigned fiscal rights and jurisdiction over

[15] *Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan in the years 1821 and 1822*, p. 199.

[16] Aitchison, XIII, 73. See also V. Minorsky, *Tadhkirat al-mulūk*, pp. 196–7. Subsequently on 19 Ẕuʾl-Ḥijja 1270/12 September 1854 a notice was inserted in the official gazette (*Rūznāma-yi vaqāyiʿ-i ittifāqiyya*) to the effect that the subjects of foreign powers residing in Persia or engaged in mercantile pursuits could not become the owners of landed property and that the Persian government had reserved the right from ancient times to make possession of land by foreigners dependent upon three conditions: first the permission of the Shah, secondly the consent of the proprietor, and thirdly the satisfaction of the peasants. If, however, such a right had ever been reserved, which is doubtful, it had fallen into abeyance. During the reigns of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh and Muḥammad Shāh foreigners had bought land freely; and only in exceptional cases had the permission of the Shah been sought. On 12 August 1857, the official gazette again referred to the notice of 1854 and added a paragraph invalidating any sales of land to foreigners which had been sealed by the provincial authorities only and not by the Shah. Such sales of property had hitherto been legalised in the provincial capitals by the seals of the local governors and fiscal authorities. Henceforward title deeds were only to be considered valid if the government had given its permission for the transfer of the property and the deed had been registered in the offices of the central government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*Great Britain, Public Record Office*, F.O.60: 218. Murray to Clarendon, No. 79, Camp near Tehran, 19 August 1857).

[17] *Great Britain, Accounts and Papers* LVIII (1862), Report by Mr Eastwick, Her Majesty's Secretary of Legation, camp near Tehran, 5 July 1861, p. 70.

[18] *Report on the agriculture of Khorasan* (Simla, 1910), p. 7.

all types of land to his followers argues in favour of this view, as also does the fact of escheat.

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the territorial structure of the Qājār empire, apart from the contraction of its frontiers, did not differ in broad outline from that of earlier Persian empires. It consisted of provinces under provincial governors appointed by and more or less closely attached to the central government and provinces under tributaries who, while acknowledging the nominal sovereignty of the Shah, remained autonomous in their local affairs. This was also true of many local tribal chiefs and large landowners. The most powerful of the tributaries was the *vālī* of Ardalān, who was virtually independent. Many of his followers passed the summer in Ardalān and removed to the neighbourhood of Baghdad in winter, habitually crossing the Ottoman–Persian frontier. From the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh onwards, the province of Ardalān was brought under a greater degree of control by the central government, but it remained under local governors until 1868 when Farhād Mīrzā Muʿtamid al-Daula, the uncle of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, was made governor on the death of the *vālī*, Ghulām Shāh Khān.

The district of Bakhtiyārī, which under the Safavids had formed a semi-independent government, was included in the province of Iṣfahān. In the early 19th century the Chahār Lang Bakhtiyārī chief, Muḥammad Taqī Khān, hardly admitted the interference of government officials in the country under his jurisdiction, but paid a small tribute and provided a small body of soldiers. He owned many villages in Firaidan and also farmed the Rām Hurmuz plain from the governor of Shīrāz. When Manūchihr Khān Muʿtamad al-Daula, the governor of Iṣfahān, demanded arrears of tribute from him in 1840 he temporized, being unwilling to risk war. He was then accused of rebellion, and Manūchihr Khān, who had marched through the Bakhtiyārī district to the south, intending also to collect arrears of taxation from Shūshtar, Dizfūl and Khūzistān, seized and murdered him.[19] The Bakhtiyārī district continued thereafter to be administered from Iṣfahān. It was opened up during the latter part of the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, but the Bakhtiyārī tribes, although called upon to pay taxes and provide soldiers, continued to enjoy a considerable degree of freedom from the interference of government officials.

The Kaʿb, inhabiting the frontier area between Persia and the Ottoman empire in south-western Persia, with their centre at Fallāḥīya retained a considerable degree of independence throughout the nineteenth century. They paid

[19] See further Layard, II, pp. 192ff. See also Rawlinson, "Notes on a march from Zoháb," pp. 104–5.

pīshkash ("gifts") by way of tribute, but for the rest administered their own affairs. In the latter part of the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh there was an attempt, which met with some success, to bring ʿArabistān, and the tribes inhabiting it, under closer government control. Luristān, which had also formed a semi-independent government under the Safavids, continued to enjoy a considerable degree of independence while coming, usually, under the jurisdiction of the governor of Kirmānshāh. Āẕarbāījān also had a large tribal population. The largest and most powerful of the tribes in that province, the Afshār, were attached at an early period to the Qājār cause, but in the wild mountain country to the west and south of Urmīya there were Kurdish and other groups, which were from time to time in open revolt. The tribal chiefs along the Aras River between Georgia and Āẕarbāījān, while usually recognizing the overlordship of Persia, sometimes sought the protection of Russia.

The Türkmen tribes in the north-east, the Gūklān (Göklen) between Astarābād and the Atrak and the Yamūt between the Atrak and Khiva, were only loosely attached to the Persian government, while the Tekke inhabiting the region between the source of the Atrak and Marv, although nominally under Persian suzerainty, were outside its control. When Āqā Muḥammad marched on Mashhad in 1796, various local chiefs, including Amīr Gūna Khān Zaʿfarānlū of Khabūshān and Isḥāq Khān of Turbat-i Ḥaidarī joined him. On his death only Mashhad and the districts along the main road to the capital remained in the hands of the central government, and even these suffered inroads from the Türkmens. Turbat-i Ḥaidarī, Kalāt-i Nādirī, Darra Gaz, Bujnūrd, Chinārān, Khabūshān, Turshīz, Ṭabas and Qāʾin openly defied the governor of Khurāsān, and it was not until 1831–2 that ʿAbbās Mīrzā finally forced the submission of all the most turbulent chiefs, deposing the *īlkhānī* of the Kurdish tribes of Khabūshān and replacing him by his son. Rebellion again broke out at the end of the reign of Muḥammad Shāh. Āṣaf al-Daula, the governor of Khurāsān, was recalled in 1847. His son, Sālār al-Daula, continued the rebellion and was joined by Jaʿfar Qulī Khān of Bujnūrd. In 1848 they seized Mashhad. The city was besieged by the royal troops and fell in 1850. Sālār was put to death but Jaʿfar Qulī Khān made his peace with the government and was appointed governor of Astarābād. That the government maintained the local leaders in power in Khabūshān and Bujnūrd in spite of their rebellion is witness to its inability to bring the tribal districts under its direct control. Sīstān, Balūchistān and the Makrān, although nominally under Persian domination, were not directly administered until the second half of the nineteenth century, the Persian

government forcibly asserting possession of western Balūchistān in 1866 and occupying Sīstān.

The Qājār kingdom was thus not, at least in its early years, a highly centralized or uniform kingdom, and in matters of social organization, land tenure and land revenue there was, in fact, much local variation. In the second half of the nineteenth century there was an increase in centralization and the authority of the government was gradually extended to the more remote districts.

Estimates of the total population vary widely. No general census was carried out over the country as a whole in the nineteenth century. General Gardane, writing in 1807, estimates the total population at nine million at the most.[20] This may have been an over-estimation. Sir John Malcolm is more cautious and thinks that a figure of six million might be more nearly correct, though he points out the impossibility of arriving at an accurate estimate on the basis of the available information.[21] By the middle of the century the population may have been nine or ten millions. In the 1850s and 1860s the population increase was limited by periodic outbreaks of famine and cholera[22] and by 1868 it was probably no more than nine and a half to ten millions. From 1869–72 there was a country-wide famine accompanied by cholera and other epidemics. This brought about a sharp decrease in the total population. Estimates of the loss of life vary, but the probable figure is about one and a half million. On this assumption the population would have been no more than eight to eight and a half millions in 1873. In the last quarter of the century there was renewed growth and by the end of the century the population was probably about ten millions.

[20] France, *Ministère des Affaires Etrangères*, *Correspondence Commerciale*, *Correspondence Politique*, *Perse*, Vol. 10, 24 December, 1807, quoted by Issawi, p. 25. [21] *History of Persia* II, p. 372.

[22] The first appearance of cholera in Persia appears to have been in 1821 when it spread from the Persian Gulf to Shīrāz. 8,000 victims in Fārs were reported. In 1822 it reached Tabrīz via Baghdad, Kurdistān and Marāgha. There were outbreaks in Gīlān in 1829, with heavy loss of life, and in Tabrīz in 1835. In 1846 some 12,000 deaths from cholera in Tehran were reported, over 6,000 in Tabrīz, 1,000 in Urmīya, 7–8,000 in Yazd and 2,000 in Kirmān. In the following year some 5,000 died from the same cause in Tabrīz, an equal number in Urmīya and some 2,000 in Khūy. In 1851 a heavy death rate from cholera was reported in Bushire and further ravages in Āẕarbāījān in 1852, with 3,000 deaths in Urmīya and 9–12,000 in Tabrīz. Further outbreaks occurred in 1853, when cholera spread from Yazd and Kirmān to Tehran, Astarābād, Hamadān, Kirmānshāh, Qum, Kāshān, Iṣfahān, Shīrāz and Bushire; 1854, 1855, 1856, 1857, 1860, when it spread from Yazd to central and northern Persia; 1861, 1867–72, when with short breaks, the disease attacked all provinces, especially in the south and east; and 1889–92 when it attacked, again with short breaks, most towns in eastern, south-eastern and northern Persia. This list, compiled from the reports of British officials in Persia at the time, while it does not give a full record of the loss of life occasioned by outbreaks of cholera, gives an indication of the magnitude of the figures. Outbreaks of plague, smallpox and typhus, with high mortality rates, were also frequent.

Throughout the century there were considerable regional fluctuations in the distribution of population, due not only to famine and epidemics, which sometimes resulted in the depopulation of villages or whole districts, but also to internal disorders and to commercial movements. The ratio between urban and rural population varied; and their relations were affected in some parts of the country by the part-time employment of the rural population in urban districts. In the last thirty years of the century there was a marked growth in the size of many towns. This was due both to an influx of peasants and, to some extent, of nomads, and also to a migration from the lesser towns to the provincial centres. Tehran in the 1840s had, during the winter months when the Shah was in residence, a population of 90,000. In 1846 and 1852 cholera reduced the number so that the population fell to about 70,000. In 1873, after the great famine years, the population of Tehran was probably again at about this figure. By 1891, it had risen to 210,000 and by 1900 to 250,000. Tabrīz, which was the largest city of the empire in the middle of the century with a population of about 130,000, hardly grew at all in the second half of the century. This is to be accounted for by the decline in its commercial importance, which was due, in part at least, to the decline of the Trebizond–Tabrīz trade route. The population of Iṣfahān apparently decreased rapidly in the first half of the century as a result of economic decline, epidemics and political disturbances. In the 1850s and 1860s the city would seem to have had some 60,000 to 70,000 inhabitants. By 1873 the figure had fallen to 50,000. Numbers then increased; by 1882 the population had reached 73,600, and by 1891, 90,000. This growth is to be attributed in part to the growing commercial importance of Iṣfahān, which had resulted from the opium trade and the increase of Persia's trade through the Persian Gulf ports, and in part to the fact that under Ẓill al-Sulṭān the city enjoyed a period of firm government.

At the beginning of the century the great majority of the population was engaged in agriculture and the rearing of livestock, and this continued to be the case throughout the century, though it would seem that the proportion of those so engaged to the total population dropped somewhat in the latter part of the century. The nomads, who had possibly formed a third of the total population in the first half of the century, fell by the end of the century to about a quarter of the total. There were various reasons for this. First, the mortality rate among the nomads during the great famine years of 1869–72 was apparently considerably higher than that among the settled population. Their only wealth consisted of their flocks and when these were decimated by lack of fodder, they had nothing

to fall back upon. Secondly there was some migration of Türkmen tribes from Khurāsān to Russia during the last twenty years or so of the century; and thirdly there was some sedentarization of nomads and migration into the towns, though this was on a fairly small scale. In addition to minor regional and inter-regional movements, such as that of peasants from one village to another and the migration of nomads from winter to summer quarters, there was in 1871–2 a substantial migration from the southern and central provinces to the Caspian littoral, and in the 1890s a movement of peasants from Āẕarbāījān, because of the economic depression in that province, and, to a lesser extent from Kirmān and Yazd to north-eastern Persia, which was becoming more prosperous.[23]

The various demographic movements outlined above are likely to have affected the ownership of land, agricultural production, and the amount of revenue accruing to the state from the land. Their results, however, are difficult to quantify and the evidence available is inadequate to trace precisely their interaction. None but the most tentative conclusions can be drawn.

In the early years of the century tribal policy and military policy were closely connected. Tribal contingents formed an important part of the military forces of the country especially before the military reforms in the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh (see further below). According to James Morier registers of tribes were kept in the government archives (*daftarkhāna*).[24] Tenure in tribal districts was to some extent affected by, though not precisely dependent upon, the provision of military contingents. In the early nineteenth century the irregular horse formed by the tribes in many cases received grants of land and liberty of pasture in return for military service.[25] Not all the tribes were nomadic or semi-nomadic. Some, like the Bakhtiyārī, carried out long annual migrations from their summer to their winter pastures. Others moved shorter distances, while yet others merely took their flocks to pastures outside their villages. The wealth of the majority came from sheep. Some also bred horses or camels. In the early years of the century the Banī Shaibān in Ṭabas, Mīr Ismāʿīl Khān in Qāʾin, and Isḥāq Khān in Turbat-i Ḥaidarī were rich in camels, which they let out to merchants engaged in local trade and in the Indo-Persian trade, and themselves participated in that trade. The Qāʾin district was also rich in sheep and a flourishing trade in carpets had developed. In Khabūshān, Chinārān and Bujnūrd stock-raising was com-

[23] I am indebted in the preceding paragraphs to G.G. Gilbar, "Demographic developments in late Qājār Persia, 1870–1906". In this the author analyses the available evidence for demographic developments in the second half of the nineteenth century and discusses its implications.

[24] *A journey through Persia, Armenia and Asia Minor to Constantinople in the years 1808 and 1809*, p. 240.

[25] Cf. Malcolm, *History of Persia* II, pp. 355–6.

bined with agriculture and these districts enjoyed a considerable degree of prosperity in the first half of the century.[26]

Animal husbandry, which was mainly, though not entirely carried on by the nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes, played an extremely important part in the economy and was the basis of wealth in many districts. There was a constant intercourse between the nomadic tribes and the towns and villages, which they provided with milk products, meat and wool and from which they received in return grain, cloth, money and articles of hardware. In the long drought of 1869–72 flocks and baggage animals, especially in the south, were decimated. Once the drought was over numbers again began to rise and continued to do so during the 1880s and 1890s, stimulated by the increased volume of both domestic and foreign trade and the growing demand for baggage animals and also by the demand for wool for the expanding carpet industry.

The relationship between the nomadic tribes and the settled population was extremely delicate, especially in the neighbourhood of the tribal migration routes. The tribes often grazed the crops in the districts through which they passed during their annual migration and committed other acts of destruction. The borderlands between rival tribal groups were also subject to much depredation. In periods when the tribes were expanding, they tended to encroach upon and usurp property in the border zones of the tribal areas. On the other hand, in periods of weakness they were subject to oppression and provocation from the government. Hostages from the tribal leaders were normally kept at court as a guarantee for the good behaviour of their relatives. The title of the tribes to their pastures was in some cases only customary; in others it was held by the tribal leaders and derived from royal grant, inheritance, purchase, conquest or usurpation. So far as the tribal leaders held government office, this facilitated their acquisition of territory. In this their position did not differ materially from that of other officials.

On the whole the government was unable to administer the tribal districts directly. In the case of the larger and more important tribes, the offices of īlkhānī and *īlbegī* were government appointments, but in practice the government could do little else but confirm the hereditary leaders in their positions, though it sometimes attempted to weaken a tribe by supporting one branch against another. By its appointment of īlkhānīs and īlbegīs the government brought the tribes, at least nominally, within the bureaucratic organization of the state. The effect of this was, on the one hand, to reinforce the authority of the īlkhānī and

[26] *Ibid.*, II, pp. 144ff. See further *Īlāt*, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, III, pp. 1095–1110, for a fuller account of the distribution of the tribes.

īlbegī vis-à-vis the tribe and, on the other, to encourage the īlkhānī and īlbegī families to settle, because of their need to transact business with government officials in the provincial centres, and so to facilitate their assimilation to the large landed proprietors.

Wheat and barley, grown both as irrigated and unirrigated crops, provided the staple food of the population (except in Gīlān), and were the basis of the village economy. A considerable variety of other crops was also grown, depending upon the climate, availability of markets and other local conditions. As commercial farming became increasingly important in the second part of the century, so Persian agriculture became more dependent upon economic developments in other countries. By the end of the century, production had increased. It had not only become much more diversified than had been the case in the first half of the century, but cash crops constituted a larger share of the total agricultural output than had been the case formerly. More land was brought under cultivation. In Gīlān there was some clearing of the forest; in Khurāsān and Astarābād the pacification of the Türkmens by the Russian border authorities and, to a limited extent, by the Persian authorities enabled lands which had earlier been abandoned to be brought back into cultivation; and as a result of improved security in Kirmānshāh, Khūzistān and Sīstān land which had been neglected was again cultivated. Various other lands were more intensively worked, and merchants, landowners and others invested more capital in agricultural production.[27]

The main grain-growing areas were western Āẕarbāījān, north-eastern and central Khurāsān, Hamadān, Kirmānshāh, Garrūs, Khamsa, Iṣfahān and Fārs. Following the sharp decrease in raw silk production as a result of the outbreak of silkworm disease in 1864, wheat and barley were grown in Gīlān and Astarābād in the early 1870s, a development which was also encouraged by the high price of wheat during the famine years of 1871–2. In the 1890s when sericulture again increased, the cultivation of wheat and barley in Gīlān was largely abandoned. In the 1860s wheat and barley production, notably in Iṣfahān, Yazd, Fārs, Kirmān, Khurāsān, Khūzistān and Kirmānshāh, lost some ground to opium cultivation, because this gave higher returns. The resulting decrease in the supply of wheat and barley was felt mainly in the towns and to some extent by the nomadic tribesmen – the peasants for the most part retained enough for their own needs. Rice production in Gīlān, Māzandarān and Astarābād rose substantially from the second half of the 1860s, due partly to a redirection of resources to

[27] See further Gilbar, "Persian agriculture in the late Qajar period, 1860–1906: some economic and social aspects".

compensate for the failure of the silk crop and partly to the high prices paid in the domestic market for rice during the famine years. When the price of rice dropped in 1872–3 to nearly its pre-famine level, output fell. It increased again, however, in the 1890s because of a demand for rice in Russia.

Opium, already cultivated in the 11th/17th century, remained a marginal crop until the second half of the 19th century, when it became one of the major crops in terms of its contribution to the national income and to exports. Increased cultivation began in the mid 1850s. By the late 1860s it was cultivated in Iṣfahān, Yazd, Fārs, Khurāsān, Kirmān and Khūzistān. The growth in its cultivation was partly a response to the need in the central and southern provinces for foreign currency to pay for imports of sugar from Java and to finance the huge deficit in commercial relations with India.[28] Raw silk, which had been the country's most important export and the second major contributor to the national income after grain, lost its position after the outbreak of the silkworm disease in 1864. From 1865–73 the average annual production fell by over 67 per cent. In 1874 it rose and then again decreased. During the 1890s it rose once more, but did not return to the level of the early 1860s. In addition to the increase in rice cultivation consequent upon the decline in the production of raw silk, there was also some expansion in the cultivation of tobacco and olives, and, temporarily, of wheat, barley and sugar-cane in the Caspian provinces. In Āẕarbāījān fruit orchards were extended in those areas in which silkworms had been reared. The prolonged failure of the silk crop, however, and the effect of this on the balance of trade in the northern provinces resulted in an economic depression which lasted until the early 1890s. The production of raw cotton also fluctuated considerably. It greatly increased as a result of the sharp rise in cotton prices in world markets caused by the American Civil War, but when prices fell during the second half of the 1860s as cotton production in the USA again rose, Persian production fell. It was once more stimulated in the 1890s, especially in

[28] As Dr Gilbar has pointed out, the cultivation of opium, although not unaffected by the sharp decline in the production of raw silk, was not its direct result. Large scale opium cultivation had already begun some ten years before the silk crisis started. Further, since commercial transactions between the north and the south were limited, an import surplus in one region could not be completely offset by an export surplus in the other: the export surplus in the Caspian provinces in the period prior to the silk crisis did not ease the shortage of foreign currency in the southern provinces and merchants had to find ways of increasing the inflow of foreign currency within the southern region itself. Similarly the shortage of foreign currency in the north after the silk crisis had started had to be solved within that area. Hence the expansion of rice cultivation and the efforts to resume raw silk production. The great increase of opium output in the latter half of the 1860s was primarily a result of the sharp decline of cotton prices in the world market once the American Civil War had come to an end. Following this development, the cultivation of cotton in southern Persia was reduced and the production of opium increased (*op. cit.*, p. 12ff.).

Khurāsān, eastern Māzandarān and Āẕarbāījān by the growth in the demand for cotton in Russia. Fruit production also rapidly increased in the latter part of the century.[29]

Various categories of land were recognized according to the nature of its ownership or the mode of its exploitation. Their extent and distribution varied with the exigencies of the moment. First there was private property (*milk*, pl. *amlāk*, *ẓiʿat*, pl. *ẓiyāʿ*), secondly crown land (*khāliṣa*, pl. *khāliṣajāt*, *khāṣṣa*)[30], thirdly land immobilized for charitable or other purposes (*vaqf*, pl. *auqāf*, *mauqūfa*, pl. *mauqūfāt*), and fourthly dead land, which comprised land which had no owner (*mavāt*) and land which had fallen out of cultivation and was abandoned (*bāyirāt*). These categories were all recognized by the sharīʿa, and so far as auqāf and mavāt were concerned detailed provisions for the constitution of the former and the revivification of the latter were laid down in the sharīʿa. Superimposed upon these various categories of land were the tenures known as *suyūrghāl* and tuyūl.

Water rights were closely connected with land tenure and the relations between the landlord and peasant, and, similarly, were governed by the sharīʿa and custom. According to the former only the channel through which water flowed and the right to use the water could be the subject of purchase and sale. Large rivers were considered to be owned in common by all Muslims, and just as the responsibility of the Imam for the administration of the land which belonged to the community had in due course devolved upon the state, so also did his rights with regard to the administration of large rivers and the levy of water dues. Lands higher up a river had a prior right to the use of the water to those situated lower down. The amount of water which could be led off depended upon changes in the volume of the water, local needs and custom, and was normally subject to careful regulation. Channels dug to lead water off from rivers belonged to those who dug them, and the cleaning and repair of such channels was the responsibility of the owners. In landlord villages the upkeep of irrigation works was often done by *corvée*. The division of the water flowing along a canal was made by a dam or sluice dividing the water into a number of

[29] For a full discussion of changes in agricultural production and their causes in the second half of the 19th century see Gilbar, *op. cit.*

[30] Under the Safavids *khāṣṣa* land was land under the direct administration of the central government in contradistinction to *mamālik* land which was under the control of provincial governors. This distinction disappeared with the fall of the Safavids. Crown land was also sometimes known as *dīvānī* land. The terms *khāliṣajāt-i daulatī* and *khāliṣajāt-i dīvānī* are also found. Eventually the term *khāliṣa* superseded other terms and was applied to crown lands only and not to the personal estates of the Shah.

shares, or by an opening or outlet hole through which the water flowed from the main channel into each plot of land; and the rotation period was by days or hours.[31]

Qanāts, underground water conduits which, by using less slope than that of the soil surface, bring water to the surface, were a special feature of the Persian plateau.[32] For the most part, the ownership of a qanāt was in the same hands as the ownership of the land which it watered. In some districts, on the other hand, land and water were separately owned, in which case water was purchased from the owner of the qanāt by those who held the land. The water was distributed according to a regular rotation, the different pieces of land watered by a qanāt normally having a prescriptive right to a certain share of the water. Water dues were usually charged by those who had sunk wells for private use in personal property or pastures if the water was used by others. In the case of natural springs, he who first used the spring to reclaim land had a right of priority. The sharīʿa and custom defined the *ḥarīm*, i.e. the amount of land bordering a water channel, qanāt, stream, or the like which was necessary to the full enjoyment of the land, and prohibited certain actions within it.

Water was one of the main limiting factors on agriculture. Its distribution was often the cause of violence and dispute. Usurpation of water rights was frequent. It was not uncommon for powerful individuals to deprive their weaker neighbours of water and so force them to sell or abandon their property. During the Qājār period there was some capital investment in irrigation and in the construction and repair of qanāts and dams, especially in the second half of the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh.[33] Such investment, however, was haphazard and sporadic: the government had no settled policy for the construction of new irrigation works or the repair and maintenance of existing dams.

Private property derived from inheritance, gift, purchase, royal grant, and from the revivification of dead land. It was also acquired by conquest and usurpation. It was transmitted by inheritance, gift[34] and sale. It sometimes carried with it immunities from taxation, which were capable of transmission with the land by sale and inheritance.[35] The rules of inheritance laid down in the

[31] See further Lambton, *Landlord and peasant in Persia*, 210ff.

[32] See further Ḳanāt, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition IV, pp. 528–33 and *Landlord and peasant*, p. 217ff.

[33] See Cornel Braun, p. 55ff. on the construction of *qanāts* in Tehran under the Qājārs. Cf. also Anṣārī, *Tārīkh-i niṣf-i jahān*, p. 62 on the repair and construction of *qanāts* in the Iṣfahān district in the 1870s.

[34] What were, in effect, gifts were sometimes legalised by a nominal sale (*ṣīgha*). Cf. Lambton, "The case of Ḥājjī Nūr al-Dīn, 1823–47: a study in land tenure", p. 59.

[35] Cf. "The case of Ḥājjī Nūr al-Dīn", pp. 55–6.

sharīʿa militated against the passing down of large properties intact over the centuries. The device of ṣulḥ,[36] by which land could be made over during the owner's lifetime, however, lessened the tendency towards fragmentation, while the fact that land was often held on a joint, or *mushāʿ*, tenure avoided the parcellation of the land among the joint heirs and made it possible to run the land thus held as one unit, the joint owners in such cases usually appointing one of their number to run the property. The size of estates varied from small family holdings[37] to large properties sometimes extending to a hundred or more villages. There was a good deal of absentee ownership, especially among the large landed proprietors. Peasant proprietorship was not widespread, and was largely confined to the less fertile districts of the country.

Government office, because of the power and wealth which it conferred, gave much opportunity for the acquisition of large estates by purchase and by more dubious means. Property was easily acquired by those in power, but it was also easily lost: the fall of a minister was often followed by the confiscation of his property. Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī, when his fall seemed imminent, bequeathed his property to Muḥammad Shāh, perhaps in the vain hope of avoiding disgrace. When in 1849 Nāṣir al-Dīn ordered a list of this to be made, it was found that many of the villages so bequeathed had been taken by force, while others had only been paid for in part.[38]

Large landowners, from whatever source their lands and wealth derived, played an important part in the life of the country, and were often able to exercise a considerable degree of independence. K.E. Abbott pointed out in 1844 that the landed proprietors of Gīlān, who were often very wealthy and in many cases lords also of districts, were almost independent of the authority of the governor of Gīlān, and shamefully abused their power.[39]

So far as patterns of settlement and the exploitation of the land was concerned there was much local variation in matters of detail. The village was the typical settlement and to it were often attached a number of hamlets (*mazraʿa*, pl. *mazāriʿ*). The distinction between the village and the mazraʿa was not one of size or method of exploitation, but of fiscal practice: the village had an independent tax assessment whereas the mazraʿa was assessed under a parent village. The village land was usually divided into ploughlands (*juft*), the size of which was

[36] "Conciliation", to settle an existing dispute or to prevent a potential dispute.

[37] The family holding was sometimes fragmented into very small units.

[38] F.O. 60: 144. Farrant to Palmerston, No. 4, Tehran, 26 June 1849.

[39] F.O. 60: 108. Account of Abbott's journey along the shores of the Caspian, incl. in Abbott to Aberdeen, No. 8, Encampment near Tehran, 29 June 1844.

affected by such factors as the amount of land available, the nature of the soil, the irrigation system, and the draught animals used; or into a number of shares (*sahm*, pl. *ashām*). The equality of the ploughlands was not strictly quantitative but also took into consideration quality. The individual holding varied from several ploughlands to fractions of a ploughland. Pressure on the land varied from district to district. Over the country as a whole it was not high – as stated above, Persia had suffered from depopulation in the eighteenth century and periodic outbreaks of famine and disease in the nineteenth century had occasioned further losses – but round some of the towns the amount of cultivable land may have been inadequate in relation to the population.

Each ploughland was usually divided into a number of parcels, held in the different fields or *ṣaḥrā* (*dasht*) into which the village land was divided (though in this respect also there was much local variation). In each ṣaḥrā the same rotation and fallow practices were usually followed in all the ploughlands. In some villages the land was permanently divided among the peasants and the ploughlands could not be altered except by their common consent;[40] in others redistribution was carried out annually or periodically. In some villages groups of peasants worked their lands together as a unit. One of the most important rights attaching to the ploughland was the right to use the village pastures and to collect scrub for fuel in them. There was also often communal organization for irrigation works, harvesting, the protection of the village crops, the pasturing of the village flocks, and the upkeep of public buildings such as the mosque and bath (*ḥammām*), so far as these existed.[41]

In the more fertile irrigated districts, especially round the towns, cultivation was intensive, the land being fertilized by household sewage mixed with earth and by the broken-down earth of old walls and buildings. Animal dung was mainly used as fuel. A fairly common rotation in irrigated districts was a three-field system, one third being left fallow each year. There was, however, great variety in rotation and fallow practices, dependent upon the nature of the soil, the amount of land available and the plentifulness or otherwise of irrigation water. In dry farming districts the land was left fallow for long periods. Seed was sown broadcast. Ploughing was carried out by a hook type plough, with a large or small steel share. Grain was cut with a sickle and threshed by a threshing board or wain or trodden out by oxen or other animals. In most districts the draught animal was the ox. Shortage of fodder limited the number of draught animals and also the number of stock in some districts, but in general flocks played an important part in the village economy. They grazed in the pasture land

[40] Cf. J.B. Fraser, *Narrative of a journey into Khorasan in the years 1821 and 1822*, p. 209.
[41] See further *Landlord and peasant*, p. 4ff.

round the village, on the stubble after harvest, or were taken farther afield in summer to mountain pastures.

In the landlord villages, which formed the majority of villages, the peasants either paid a rent in cash or kind, or more usually cultivated the land under a crop-sharing agreement (*muzāraʿa*) with the landlord. These agreements which were for the most part oral agreements, were largely determined by local custom, though the sharīʿa laid down detailed provisions for such agreements. The type of agriculture practised, dry or irrigated, and, if irrigated, the method of irrigation, the crop grown, the ownership of the draught animals, and the provision of the seed affected the share of the crop which the peasant paid to the landlord. Responsibility for the payment of the tax on the land under a crop-sharing agreement was, according to the sharīʿa, the landlord's unless otherwise stipulated in the crop-sharing agreement. In practice there was considerable variation; sometimes both parties paid a part of the tax demand, the proportion which each paid varying with different crops and local custom.[42]

In many districts the landlord exacted, in addition to a share of the crop, so many days free labour from the peasants and their draught animals and dues in clarified butter, firewood, and chickens, and sometimes also a poll-tax or hearth tax, and entertainment for himself and his bailiff. It is difficult to ascertain how widespread these dues were, but it is probable that they were common practice in many parts of the country, especially in the more remote districts. There is an interesting minute on dues and labour service made by the Council of State in 1881 on a memorandum proposing their abolition among the Nestorian community in the district of Urmīya. This reads: "Since this is [an old] custom and the [day's] labour is taken also from Mahommedans, Armenians and Nestorians should also give it. Otherwise the landlord will lose his rights over the peasantry, and Moslem peasants will require the same [concessions]. The custom has been that all the peasants shall give one day's labour, one load of fuel, etc., and that if these were not wanted, they paid their value."[43]

[42] In the tribal areas the situation was often more complex. For example among the Mukrī Kurds in Sāūj Bulāgh in or about 1838 the Bābā Amīra tribal chief who held the property received one fifteenth of the crop, the *āghā* (minor chief) to whom it was assigned and who was the responsible agent *vis-à-vis* the government, one tenth, and the *zirāʿatchīs*, who superintended the cultivators, one fifth. The remainder was shared between the costs of tillage and labour equally or in some other proportion (Rawlinson, "Notes on a journey from Tabríz", pp. 35–6).

[43] *British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. LXXIII (1881–2), London, 1889, ed. Sir Edward Herslet and E.C. Herslet, p. 341. This memorandum confirms and re-establishes regulations drawn up in 1864 by the Persian government with respect to certain grievances of the Nestorians in the districts of Urmīya and accepted by the landowners and chiefs of those districts. On the occasion of their re-establishment, Mr Ronald Thomson, the British Minister, raised certain points which were submitted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Shah and by him to the Council of State and gave rise to the minute quoted above.

The landlord's share in grain was normally paid in kind and the crop divided on the threshing-floor. His share on summer crops was probably usually reckoned by valuation and sometimes commuted into a cash payment. The village headman, who, in landlord villages, was normally the landlord's bailiff, also commonly received a share of the crop or some other payment from the peasants. In addition to the crop-sharing peasants there were also, in the larger villages, labourers who worked for other more prosperous peasants, as servants of the landlord, or as village craftsmen and servants.

In a country with so capricious a climate as Persia, the crop-sharing system had the advantage that it protected the peasant from demands for rent when his crop failed and made him less vulnerable to changes in prices and depreciation in the value of money, which was an important consideration in Qājār Persia. On the other hand, the crop-sharing system, coupled with the prevailing insecurity of tenure, was a disincentive to increased agricultural production.

Yields were low and after the peasant had paid the landlord's share, set aside seed for the next year and provided for his own and his family's subsistence there was usually little left over for sale or barter. He was thus seldom able to accumulate reserves, and was often in need of money for capital requirements to replace livestock and agricultural implements and for current expenses such as the provision of seed. In many cases he had to borrow, often at high rates of interest, to provide these and, not infrequently, to finance the interval between sowing and harvest. The money-lender was often a landowner, merchant, corn-chandler, peddler, or a rich *ᶜālim*. The root cause of the peasant's poverty, however, was not the crop-sharing system as such or the tax system (see below) but rather the arbitrary nature of society and the exactions to which he was subject from other classes of the population.

Morier, who travelled widely in Persia in the early years of the century, states that the prevailing extortion killed any initiative. He writes: "No one would undertake to cultivate a piece of land because he knew its produce would fall to anyone but himself. He is therefore content to live from hand to mouth, without permitting himself to indulge in any hope that he may lay up a store for himself to serve in times of scarcity."[44] Fraser, who also had wide experience of Persia, similarly draws attention to the extortion and injustice practised against the peasants. He states, however, that they nevertheless often appeared to enjoy relative comfort, that their food appeared to be enough and that their clothing was coarse but sufficient.[45] There is some evidence to suggest that the increase in

[44] F.O. 60: 7. Morier to Ouseley, Shiraz, 10 May 1811, incl. in Ouseley to Castlereagh, No. 24 Tabriz, 3 September 1812. [45] *Narrative of a journey into Khorasan*, p. 173.

agricultural production which took place in the last forty years or so of the nineteenth century was accompanied by a certain improvement in the standard of living of the peasants. In some districts it seems that their daily diet was more diversified, that their consumption of foreign and locally made industrial goods increased, and that they were able to accumulate a few small savings.[46]

Sir Justin Sheil, writing in the middle of the century, considered officials and others who had been assigned rights over the land or its produce as the source of oppression rather than the landlord. He points out that in a thinly populated country such as Persia it was in the interests of the landlord to conciliate his tenants and perpetuate their residence on his property. "Landlords", he states, "treated their tenants well which it is obviously in their interest to do. It is from teeool-holders, mohessils, and irregular arbitrary taxation that the peasantry suffers vexation and extortion."[47] Mrs Bishop, who travelled widely in the late nineteenth century and viewed the country with a sympathetic and perceptive eye, reported that the peasants enjoyed a tolerable security of tenure so long as they paid their rent,[48] but she also points out that they, like all other classes, suffered from the prevailing insecurity. The peasant had no security for the earnings of his labour, and was "the ultimate sponge to be sucked dry by all above him".[49] Although eviction was rare, the peasants only exceptionally had by local custom security of tenure, apart from that accorded by the principle enunciated by the Islamic jurists that "what is cultivated belongs to the cultivator". They often had no right to compensation for any improvements they might have made to the land if they were evicted or for buildings they might have constructed. In spite of Sir Justin Sheil's assessment, it would seem that the general tendency of landlords was towards extortion, and that this had a stultifying effect on development. William J. Dickson, commenting on the fact that the peasants in Gīlān had not reverted in 1881–2 to the cultivation of raw silk on the scale they had practised before the outbreak of silkworm disease in 1864, states that the peasants "have found from experience, that rice suits them better. It requires less trouble to cultivate, and is, moreover, in itself an article of food upon which they principally subsist, whereas the richer commodity [i.e. raw silk], by exciting the cupidity of the landed proprietors, not only left the peasants no profit, but subjected them to constant oppression."[50]

[46] See further Gilbar, "Persian agriculture in the late Qajar period, 1860–1906", p. 52ff.
[47] "Note on the Persian revenue" in Lady Sheil, p. 391.
[48] *Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan* I, p. 306. [49] *Ibid.*, II, p. 258.
[50] *Accounts and Papers*, LXIX (1882), William J. Dickson, Report . . . on the Trade of Persia, 1882, 496, quoted by Gilbar, "Persian agriculture", p. 11.

Economically, crop-sharing peasants and tenants were at the mercy of the landlord. There was, however, a practical limit set to the demands which the latter made. Dead peasants were no use and so he had to leave them enough to keep alive; further the peasants were not serfs, and if pressed too hard they might seek refuge in flight, as they sometimes did, though the fact that they might be burdened by indebtedness to the landlord made this more difficult.[51]

The value of property varied widely, depending primarily on the amount of water available, the nature of the soil and the accessibility of markets. Malcolm states that during the latter years of the Safavid dynasty "land sold for twenty-five and thirty years' purchase; and that all the late revolutions and the heavy imposts have never reduced it below half its former value".[52] J. Macdonald Kinneir, writing about 1810, puts land values rather lower and states that the usual price did not exceed ten years' purchase.[53]

Aḥmad ʿAlī Vazīrī, who wrote his *Jughrāfiyā-yi mamālik-i Kirmān* between 1874 and 1876, asserts that there was a marked increase in the value of landed estates in the whole of the province of Kirmān and especially in the districts of Sīrjān, Rafsanjān and Arzūya, between about the year 1844 and the time when he was writing. This, he claims, was due to the high prices paid for cotton and madder which were exported to India and the scarcity of grain in Yazd and most of Persia in the famine years (1869–1872). He alleges that not only had the wealth of the landowners greatly increased but also that the peasants were much better off than formerly. Many of those from Rafsanjān had become *ḥājjīs*. The rise in the price of *kurk* (fine goat's wool) and wool had, he states, made rich men of the owners of sheep and goats.[54]

Crown lands were accumulated by conquest, usurpation, confiscation for arrears of taxation, rebellion or some other cause, escheat and purchase; dispersal by gift and sale was also frequent. In, or about, 1854 the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mīrzā Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān, claimed that khāliṣa land could not be permanently alienated and that all grants of khāliṣa fell in to the crown on the

[51] About the middle of the century there appears to have been a movement into Tabrīz from the outlying districts in search of the security which was to be found in the anonymity of the large town. Abbott reported that the growing population of Tabrīz at this time was due to the gradual removal of the "wretched inhabitants" from the surrounding districts to Tabrīz where, being in a dense mass, they had more security than when scattered in small communities (F.O. 60: 197. Abbott to Thomson, No. 149, Tehran, 21 December 1854, incl. No. 5 in Abbott to Clarendon, No. 81, Tabriz, 26 December 1854). Towards the end of the century there was also a large movement of peasants and others from north-eastern and north-western Persia into Russia. This was partly due to the economic crisis in northern Persia which had resulted from the decline in the silk trade and Persia's adverse trade balance in general, as well as the decline of the Tabrīz-Trebizond route after the 1860s.

[52] *History of Persia* II, pp. 349–50. [53] *A geographical memoir of the Persian empire*, p. 47.

[54] Ed. Bāstānī Pārīzī, in *Farhang-i īrān zamīn* XIV, 1–4 (1345/1966–7), pp. 158, 168–9.

death of the ruler.[55] His motives in this were ulterior, and he may well have been deliberately, or accidentally, confusing grants of khāliṣa land with tuyūls granted on khāliṣa or other land. Nothing came of this attempt and khāliṣa continued to be disposed of by gift and sale. The border-line between crown land and the personal estates of the ruler was in the early Qājār period somewhat shadowy, but as the conception of state revenue as something distinct from the personal income of the Shah became stronger, crown lands ceased to be considered as the ruler's personal estates.

Many of the crown lands acquired by Nādir Shāh fell to the Qājārs, who also created new crown lands by purchase and confiscation. Āghā Muḥammad bought considerable areas of land in Māzandarān, Astarābād and elsewhere, which he made into khāliṣa.[56] Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, Muḥammad Shāh, and Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh acquired many estates by confiscation for arrears of taxation or other reasons and some by purchase, and constituted them into khāliṣa. There were various categories: khāliṣajāt-i dīvānī, which remained in the full possession of the government; khāliṣajāt-i tuyūlī, the possession of which carried with it the obligation to furnish military contingents and which were mainly found in tribal areas; khāliṣajāt-i intiqālī, which were handed over to individuals for life or a shorter period, with the right of transfer; khāliṣajāt-i żabṭī, land confiscated by the government for arrears of taxation, rebellion or some other cause, a portion of the revenue of which might be allowed to the former owner or his relatives as a pension (*mustamarrī*), the estate remaining annexed to the crown until its former owner, or his heirs, were restored to favour, when the estate might, according to the pleasure of the sovereign, be returned; khāliṣajāt-i żabṭī, consisting of lands mainly in the Iṣfahān district which had been entered as khāliṣa in the Afghan and Nādirī registers, although they had never been in the effective possession of the government; and *khāliṣajāt-i bazrī.* The last named, also mainly in the Iṣfahān district, were estates which had fallen out of cultivation towards the beginning of the reign of Muḥammad Shāh. With a view to preventing a loss of revenue, diwan officials had been instructed to provide the peasants with seed, and to include the names of the villages concerned in the lists of khaliṣajāt. Although these lands were subsequently returned to their owners, they continued to be known as khāliṣajāt-i bazrī.[57]

At the beginning of the century it was estimated that only one eighth of Fārs and Persian ʿIrāq was crown land.[58] By the middle of the century crown land had

[55] See "The case of Ḥājjī Nūr al-Dīn", p. 67. [56] ʿAbd-Allāh Mustaufī, I, p. 657.
[57] *Landlord and peasant*, pp. 147–8; Anṣārī, *Tārīkh niṣf-i jahān*, p. 49.
[58] E.Scott Waring, p. 85.

become an increasingly important and extensive category of land and was to be found all over the empire. In 1861, Eastwick stated that one third, or according to some accounts, one half of the land of Persia was khāliṣa.[59] The latter figure would appear to be unduly high. Sīstān and Balūchistān also became crown land after 1866. E. Stack, writing in 1882, notes that there was a constant tendency of *arbābī* land to become *dīvānī* by resumption of religious grants, confiscation, and by escheat.[60] On the other hand in the forty years or so leading up to the constitution much khāliṣa was sold.

As in earlier periods, khāliṣa land was either directly administered on a crop-sharing agreement, let on a tenancy, or its revenue farmed, the tenant or the farmer then concluding a crop-sharing or tenancy agreement with the peasants. The rate of tax paid by those who held crown lands varied in different places and at different times. Karelin, the commander of a Russian expedition to the eastern shores of the Caspian Sea, in a report made to the Russian Minister of Finance and Commerce in 1836, states that the villages in the Astarābād district, whether they belonged to the crown or were granted to the khans and begs (presumably as tuyūls), paid heavy taxes. Besides the work the inhabitants were obliged to perform for their masters, every house paid a due in kind on Indian corn and wheat, and a cash payment on silk and horned cattle. They were further bound in time of war to provide one man, fully equipped and armed, out of every twenty grown men. Should a military movement be made, the peasants were required to furnish supplies; and the local people were also obliged to entertain the officers of the crown and to conciliate them with presents. It was difficult in these circumstances for them to exist and many who possessed property employed every means to conceal it and avoid being robbed by both their own chiefs and the government.[61] In the Bampūr khāliṣa towards the end of the century, the peasants were said to obtain a bare subsistence and their condition to be one of degradation.[62]

If khāliṣa land was rented or farmed on a *muqāṭaʿa* contract,[63] or a tuyūl was granted on it, the lessee or *tuyūldār* was responsible for the payment of the government tax, unless he was granted immunity for some reason or other. In the case of a tuyūl granted on khāliṣa land, the taxes were sometimes remitted in

[59] Report by Mr Eastwick, Her Majesty's Secretary of Legation, camp near Tehran, 5 July 1861, p. 70. [60] *Six months in Persia* II, p. 248.

[61] F.O. 65: 234. Report by Karelin to Count Cancrine on an expedition to the E. Shores of the Caspian, incl. in No. 63 Durham to Palmerston, Saint Petersburgh, 8 April 1837.

[62] *Gazetteer of Persia* IV (Calcutta, 1892), p. 29.

[63] The term *muqāṭaʿa* covered both a contract under which the tax of a district was assessed at a fixed sum and also the farming of the revenue of a district by the inhabitants for a fixed sum.

return for the provision of a military contingent. Malcolm states that in a desire to encourage the new regular army which was being trained by ʿAbbās Mīrzā, crown lands were granted to soldiers on more favourable terms than to other tenants.[64] These grants were presumably not tuyūls but leases. Sometimes khāliṣa land appears to have paid a lower rate of tax than neighbouring land which was not khāliṣa, while khāliṣa land which had been disposed of by sale seems occasionally to have paid a higher rate of taxation than neighbouring villages which had from the outset been held as private property. For example, villages in Mākū which had come to the chief by inheritance were paying, in the early twentieth century, twenty per cent of the cotton and wheat crop, whereas villages bought from the crown paid one third of the cotton, wheat and barley crop.[65]

In the provinces the taxes on khāliṣa land, so far as its revenue was not assigned, were collected by the provincial governors, as also was the government's share of the crops or its rent. The grain obtained in this way was stored in government granaries and used to provision the army, and to pay, in part, the salaries of government officials. Price levels on the whole tended to follow grain prices. Adequate supplies of grain were thus crucial to price control. No government could lightly regard the possibility of bread riots and civil disorders such as might occur if grain supplies failed. The possession of crown lands gave governments the possibility of lessening the impact of crop failures and famine and also of breaking rings set up by hoarders, though it was itself sometimes guilty of holding grain till prices rose. The inadequacy of communications and transport reduced the effectiveness of the release of grain by the government from its own granaries to alleviate crop failures, which were normally of a local nature but sometimes, as in 1871–2, countrywide. Such measures as they took were seldom successful for these and other reasons.

By the second part of the century, much crown land had fallen into a state of decay and made little contribution to the revenue. In Iṣfahān at the beginning of the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh about a thousand villages and hamlets, some khāliṣa, some *vaqf*, and others in private ownership were in a state of ruin. A large sum of money, together with a considerable quantity of grain, was made available on the revenue of Iṣfahān to Mīrzā ʿAbd al-Ḥusain, the head of the finance department of Iṣfahān, to enable him to bring them back into cultivation. He misappropriated the money and rebelled. After the ensuing disorders had been put down, the estates of those implicated, and of a number of

[64] *History of Persia* II, p. 358n. [65] *Gazetteer of Persia* (Simla, 1914), II, p. 69.

other people also, were confiscated to the crown. Subsequently, possession of these estates was regained by their former owners by various means. In 1863 an attempt was made to bring khāliṣa land in Iṣfahān back into a state of prosperity. An order was issued for the provision of the necessary expenses and the conclusion of five-year leases.[66] Nothing came of this. The efforts of Muḥammad Ismāʿīl Khān Vakīl al-Mulk, who became governor of Kirmān in 1860 and was sent about the same time to Kirmān to look into the condition of khāliṣa property there, were apparently more successful.[67] More khāliṣa land fell out of cultivation in Iṣfahān during the famine years of 1871–2, and further confusion ensued in the land registers. Finally in 1874, Ẓill al-Sulṭān, the governor of Iṣfahān, in the hope of restoring the situation, concluded muqāṭaʿa contracts for the cultivation of the khāliṣajāt of Iṣfahān for a ten-year period, instead of for the usual three years.[68] In general Iṣfahān prospered under the government of Ẓill al-Sulṭān and it may be assumed that the condition of the khāliṣajāt improved with that of the province as a whole.

Meanwhile, increasing financial stringency in the latter years of the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh led to the issue of a farmān in 1306/1889–90 for the sale of khāliṣajāt, excluding those in the capital. Much khāliṣa was in due course sold, in the reigns of both Nāṣir al-Dīn and Muẓaffar al-Dīn. Round Iṣfahān a great deal was bought by rich notables, ʿulamā and merchants. This had certain adverse effects on the economy. Formerly the peasants who cultivated the land had paid their rent in grain to the government. The latter then resold the grain at low rates. In 1897–8 the new owners were reported to have held the grain against a rise in prices and to have ground down the peasants. As a result the latter had no money to spend in the bazaars and trade was adversely affected.[69] In 1901–2, the major part of Shūlistān was sold to Muʿīn al-Tujjār Bushahrī, one of the Shah's private bankers, in order to ease the government's financial difficulties,[70] and in 1905, two rich merchants, the Amīn al-Żarb and the Raʾīs al-Tujjār of Mashhad, bought most of the crown lands of Sīstān for a quarter of a million *tūmāns*.[71]

Vaqf land was of two kinds: land immobilized either for a charitable purpose

[66] *Rūznāma-i daulat-i ʿāliyya-i Īrān*, 18 Dhuʾl-Qaʿda 1279/7 May 1863.

[67] *Ibid.*, 14 Jumādā II 1280/26 November 1863. [68] Anṣārī, *Tārīkh-i niṣf-i jahān*, p. 51ff.

[69] Great Britain, *Foreign Office, Diplomatic and consular reports, annual series* 2260 (1899), J.R. Preece, Report on the trade of the consular district of Isfahan for the years 1897–8 and 1898–9, p. 13. See also Anṣārī, *Tārīkh-i niṣf-i jahān* for an account of the usurpation of villages in the Iṣfahān district by the government and others (pp. 67ff).

[70] *Gazetteer of Persia* III (Simla, 1910), under Mamassanī, p. 653.

[71] F.O. 60: 706. Conf. diary No. 18 of Capt. A.D. Macpherson, HBM's Consul for Sistan and Kain for the period 17–24 May 1905 and Meshed Diary No. 20 for week ending 20 May.

(*vaqf-i ʿāmm*) or in favour of specific beneficiaries (*vaqf-i khāṣṣ*). A condition of the constitution of a vaqf was that the founder should have full rights of disposal of the property which he intended to constitute into a vaqf. The fact that land could be made into vaqf implies, therefore, the existence of private property over which the owner had full rights of disposal. Land was sometimes constituted into a vaqf-i khāṣṣ in the hope of protecting the property from confiscation. The process limited the founder's freedom of disposal but enabled the property to be transmitted to succeeding generations.

Vaqf properties ranged from large and very wealthy properties to those whose income was minimal, perhaps barely sufficient for the subsistence of the servant of the shrine for the benefit of which it might have been constituted. Some *auqāf* survived through the centuries. Others were usurped, resumed,[72] fell out of cultivation, or became null and void because the purposes for which they were constituted had ceased to exist. The Safavids made many properties into vaqf, notably when Shāh ʿAbbās constituted his personal property into a vaqf for the twelve *imāms*, Muḥammad and his daughter Fāṭima. He made himself *mutavallī*, or administrator, of the vaqf, vesting this office in the ruling Shah after him, who thus had an interest in the continuation of the institution. A large number of Safavid auqāf survived the fall of the dynasty. The most important were those belonging to the shrine of the Imām Riżā at Mashhad, which held many valuable properties in different parts of the country, especially Khurāsān, as also did some other Shīʿī shrines and *madrasas*. Fraser reports that the revenue of the shrine of the Imām Riżā had amounted under Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain, the last of the Safavid Shahs, to 15,000 Khurāsānī tūmāns (3,000,000 rs.). Many of the properties were subsequently usurped, and when Fraser was in Persia in 1821–2, the income of the shrine was, he states, probably not more than 2,000 or 2,500 tūmāns (40–50,000 rs.).[73] Curzon, writing some seventy years later, puts the shrine revenues at 60,000 tūmāns in cash and 10,000 *kharvārs* in grain.[74]

The office of administrator of a large vaqf was usually extremely profitable. The administrator was entitled to a proportion of the revenue, greater or smaller according to the terms of the *vaqf-nāma*. Further, control of large properties

[72] Nādir Shāh promulgated a decree for the resumption of *auqāf* in the last year of his reign but died before it was fully implemented (see further *Landlord and peasant*, p. 131).

[73] *Narrative of a journey into Khorasan*, p. 455. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the *tūmān* was worth about £1 sterling. By the middle of the century it had fallen to 10*s*. (see Lambton, "Persian trade under the early Qājārs", p. 238), and by the end of the century to about 4*s*.

[74] *Persia and the Persian Question* II, p. 489.

brought with it social and political influence. Many of the ᶜulamā were administrators of auqāf, often holding these positions by hereditary right. For example, the office of mutavallī of the shrine of Fāṭima, the sister of the Imām Riżā, at Qum, held by Ḥājjī Mīr Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir at the turn of the nineteenth century, had been in his family since his ancestor, Ḥājjī Mīr Sayyid Ḥusain Khātim al-Mujtahidīn, had been appointed mutavallī under the early Safavids. Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir was reported to have an immense personal fortune and was alleged to own one third of the villages in the province.[75] The position of the ᶜulamā as administrators of auqāf implicated them in the economic, and especially the agricultural, fabric of the country. This, coupled with the fact that they were often also the beneficiaries, in one way or another, of the revenues of charitable auqāf, inevitably affected their attitude to the land system and to agriculture and made them reluctant to take, or support, steps to change its basic features.

The terms tuyūl and suyūrghāl covered both the grant of the revenue of a district, with or without the grant of immunities and jurisdiction, and also, by extension, the land on which such a grant was made. The terms first became current in Ilkhanid and Timurid times. Whatever the original concepts of the tuyūl and suyūrghāl, they became assimilated to the *iqṭāᶜ*, which the Sunnī jurists had earlier, rightly or wrongly, seen as a development from early Islamic precedents, thus bringing it within the cognizance of the sharīᶜa.[76] Like the iqṭāᶜ of the Saljūq period, the tuyūl tended, by usurpation, to become hereditary. In Ilkhanid and Timurid times the term suyūrghāl was primarily used to denote the grant of a provincial government with immunities or a grant in lieu of a pension. In the former sense the term suyūrghāl was in due course superseded by the term tuyūl, and in Safavid times its use was mainly confined to the designation of a hereditary or life grant on crown lands, vaqf land or usufructory property in lieu of a pension. Such suyūrghāls, so far as they were granted on property belonging to the beneficiary, carried with them immunities and sometimes jurisdiction.

Under the Qājārs the term suyūrghāl, although occasionally found at the beginning of the period, became obsolete, and was replaced in its varying senses also by the term tuyūl. This was now used to cover the grant of a sum of money made on some fund, the realization of which was usually, though not necessar-

[75] E. Aubin, "De Téhéran à Ispahan", pp. 456–8.

[76] See further *Landlord and peasant*, pp. 28ff., C. Cahen, "L'Évolution de l'iqta' du ixᵉ au xiiiᵉ siècle" and Lambton, "Reflections on the iqṭāᶜ" in *Arabic and Islamic studies in Honor of Hamilton A. R. Gibb*, ed. George Makdisi (Leiden, 1965), pp. 358–76.

ily, entrusted to the beneficiary,[77] a grant of money with or without immunities and territorial jurisdiction in lieu of salary or as a pension, or simply the grant of an immunity, and, by extension, the land on which such grants were made. Āghā Muḥammad Khān, after defeating Murtażā Qulī Khān in 1781, gave Bisṭām as a tuyūl to Jaʿfar Qulī Khān and Simnān as a suyūrghāl to ʿAlī Qulī Khān.[78] It is not clear what the distinction between these two grants was. Perhaps the terms were loosely used synonymously. For example, Riżā Qulī Khān states that Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, when he visited Sulṭānābād in 1828–9, conferred upon Yūsuf Khān Gurjī, the governor and army commander of Persian ʿIrāq, his estates (*raqabāt*) as "a permanent tuyūl and everlasting suyūrghāl".[79] Although the term tuyūl was no longer applied to what was, in effect, a provincial government, in many cases the position of a tuyūldār (the holder of a tuyūl) was not very different from that of the *muqṭaʿ/vālī* of earlier times. Sir Justin Sheil, writing in 1854, describes the system as follows: "Every village in the kingdom pays a fixed tax on the land appertaining to it. It is customary to make a grant of this revenue in payment of salaries and pensions, sinecures, etc. This is called *Tiool*, and the holder of it becomes lord of the village, especially if he is a person of rank and position."[80] Sheil seems, thus, to have believed that it was, in theory at least, simply a grant on the revenue of a district. He goes on to describe the tuyūl "as a most pernicious system: whether in recompense for services or in remuneration for salary. The *tiooldar* being only a holder of the land for a period usually short and always uncertain, has no object but to levy all the contributions he possibly can during his tenure. By some means not very intelligible he makes himself the temporary owner of the land to the complete exclusion of the real proprietor."[81] Almost everyone holding a position at court, from the Prime Minister downwards, was, he states, a tuyūldār.[82] In theory, the tuyūldār had no authority to

[77] The chief of the Jaʿfar Bay Türkmens held as a *tuyūl* the customs house dues at Ḥasan Qulī, which were levied on the traders in naphtha of the Oghoorjellee tribe (F.O. 60: 122. Taylour Thomson to Sheil, Tehran, 15 April 1846, incl. in Sheil to Aberdeen, No. 50, Tehran, 4 May 1846). It was possible to farm a *tuyūl* drawn on some fund to a third person. Thus Mīrzā Jaʿfar Khān, who held the taxes on the butchers of Tabrīz as a *tuyūl*, farmed these to a third person (F.O. 60: 152. Stevens to Sheil, No. 51, Tabriz, 23 May 1850, incl. in Sheil to Palmerston, No. 83, camp near Tehran, 20 July 1850). Cf. also Rawlinson, "Notes on a journey from Tabríz", p. 5, note.

[78] ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Najaf Qulī, *The dynasty of the Kajars*, p. 15. There is also the statement in the *Fārs-nāma-yi Nāṣirī* of Ḥājjī Mīrzā Ḥasan Fasāʾī that the Gāvbāz, a tribe who fattened cattle, were the *tuyūl* and *suyūrghāl* of the *naqīb* of the *qalandars* and darvishes of Fārs (Tehran, lith., 1894–6, II, 314). This presumably means that the taxes of the Gāvbāz were allocated to the *naqīb* of the *qalandar*s and darvishes of Fārs. [79] Riżā Qulī Khān, *Raużat al-ṣafā* IX, p. 704.

[80] F.O. 60: 194, Sheil to the Shah, n.d. [81] *Ibid.* [82] *Ibid.*

alter the tax assessment[83] but in practice, as Sheil states, he often levied contributions in excess of the basic assessment.

A tuyūl for the beneficiary's salary as governor, or to provide for his subsistence, was not necessarily given on the area of which he was governor. Naṣr-Allāh Mīrzā b. Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā, who was for years governor of Shūlistān and Mamasanī, for example, held the *bulūk* of Ardistān as a tuyūl for his subsistence.[84] Certain districts were also sometimes allocated as a tuyūl in payment of the salary of a specific office.

Traces are to be found of a grant comparable to the iqṭāᶜ given to soldiers in earlier times. Morier states that the troops of Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā, the Governor of Fārs received, about the year 1809, in addition to their annual pay and daily allowance of fodder, a certain allotment of land in their own country for the maintenance of their families, which they tilled and sowed, and of which they reaped the annual fruits.[85] Scott Waring, writing in or about 1802, states that the soldiers of the state who cultivated land were exempt from all taxes but that in the event of their being called upon for service, they were obliged to abandon their crops to the superintendence of their friends.[86] Similarly in the latter part of the century, the *jambāz* militia of Bampūr, who were only called up in times of emergency or on special occasions, received no pay but cultivated their lands free.[87]

In the latter half of the nineteenth century various tribal groups in certain of the north-eastern frontier areas held land free in return for the provision of military contingents or for the military services which they performed in connection with frontier defence. This was the case in Darra Gaz and Bujnūrd. Capt. G.C. Napier records in 1874 that the khan of Darra Gaz maintained a body of 800 horsemen mounted and armed as a condition of his tenure. He held his lands free of land tax but subject to the payment of a yearly tribute in the shape of presents of money and horses, the amount of which regulated the treatment which he received at the hands of the provincial and central governments. A sum was allotted annually from the treasury of the governor of Khurāsān for the payment of a portion of the horsemen but the arrangement was nominal since, in the words of Capt. Napier, "no portion of the subsidy leaves the hands of the

[83] In the regulations with respect to the grievances of the Nestorians referred to above it is stated that "Feudal proprietors [i.e. *tuyūldārān*] must also adhere to the Government arrangement respecting levying of imposts, and may not in one year anticipate the next year's revenues" (*British and Foreign State Papers*, vol. LXXIII (1881–2), p. 338). [84] *Fārs-nāma-yi Nāṣirī* II, p. 111.

[85] *A Journey through Persia*, p. 110. [86] *A tour to Sheeraz*, p. 87.

[87] *Gazetteer of Persia* (Calcutta 1892), IV, p. 27.

officials at Mashad".[88] Similarly the īlkhānī of the Shādilū of Bujnūrd was exempt from the payment of land tax in return for guarding the Atrak frontier. He also paid an annual tribute in horses and money to the Shah. No taxes were taken from the people save such as the īlkhānī himself might choose to take. The militia he raised to guard the frontier held rent-free lands and had a small assignment of grain in lieu of pay. Some of the cavalry recruited by the īlkhānī of the Shādilū, and also the body of horse raised by the īlkhānī of the Zaᶜfarānlū similarly received assignments of grain.[89] These grants were presumably made to individuals, not by the central government, but by the local leaders to whom the central government granted the exemption from taxation.

There are also cases somewhat reminiscent of the iqṭāᶜs granted to Saljūq women and the grants made to Ilkhanid women. When Āghā Bājī, the daughter of Ibrāhīm Khān Shīshaʾī, came to join Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh's *ḥaram*, she brought with her two hundred personal servants (*ᶜamalajāt-i shakhṣī*) from Qarābāgh and they were given a sum from the revenue of Qum as a suyūrghāl.[90] Similarly, the diwan dues of Niyāsar and its hamlets in the province of Kāshān were the tuyūl of Muḥammad Shāh's sister and were alienated from the control of the governor of the province.[91] Lastly the element of "protection", as found in the earlier *taljīᶜa*,[92] played some part in the spread of the tuyūl (though it was not one of the main reasons for its emergence). Small landowners or peasant proprietors would sometimes request a neighbouring landowner or powerful individual to ask for their land as a tuyūl so that they might obtain his protection against the government.[93]

Much crown land was alienated as tuyūl. For example, the greater part of the Shāhsevan country in Āẕarbāījān, which was crown land, was granted towards the middle of the century in tuyūl to the family of Abuʾl-Fatḥ Khān, a Qarābāghī chief of some consequence.[94] It was, however, not only crown land that was so granted (although Sykes, writing in 1910, appears to consider that tuyūl land was state land).[95] Grants were also made on private property and vaqf land. If a tuyūl drawn on the tax or taxes of a district was granted to the owner of the district, this in effect amounted virtually to a grant of fiscal and judicial

[88] *Collection of Journals & Reports received from Capt. the Hon. G.C. Napier, on Special Duty in Persia, 1874*, pp. 303–4. See further *Landlord and peasant*, p. 163.

[89] Napier, *Collection of Journals*, pp. 286–7; *Gazetteer of Persia* I (Simla, 1902), pp. 92, 373.

[90] ᶜAẓud al-Daula, p. 14. [91] ᶜAbd al-Raḥīm Ẓarrābī, p. 61.

[92] The act of placing oneself under the protection of another by ceding one's land to him.

[93] Cf. Aubin, p. 466. [94] Rawlinson "Notes on a Journey from Tabríz", p. 5.

[95] *Report on the agriculture of Khorasan*, p. 7.

immunity. In fact, it was often stated in the document granting the tuyūl that government officials should not enter the district.[96] In such cases the advantage to the owner was considerable. A similar situation arose if a tuyūl was granted on khāliṣa land or on vaqf land.

Unless otherwise stipulated the tuyūl was normally granted for life. Sometimes the document for its grant would state that it was given to the holder and his heirs in perpetuity. In fact, however, tuyūls were resumable at will, and, in theory at least, fell in with the death of the ruler unless confirmed by his successor. On the death of the tuyūldār his heirs were frequently able to secure a regrant of the tuyūl. There was, in fact, a marked tendency for tuyūls to become hereditary and to be assimilated to private property. Rawlinson, who travelled widely in Persia in the first half of the century, writing in 1838, thought that about one fifth of the land revenue was alienated from the government in tuyūl.[97]

There was considerable variety in the matter of the payment made to the government by a tuyūldār on institution and on the regrant of a tuyūl. Probably no uniform practice prevailed. Those who held large tuyūls were possibly also expected to offer "presents" (*pīshkash*) at the New Year and, in the event of a royal "progress" through or in the neighbourhood of their tuyūls, to offer extraordinary presents and entertainment, but these were *ad hoc* levies to which any person of substance might be subjected.

The obligations of the tuyūldār varied. If the tuyūl was in lieu of a pension, the obligations, if any, were minimal. If it was attached to an office, the situation was different, though such tuyūls often became sinecures in the course of time. In the case of a tuyūl granting fiscal and judicial immunity, the holder's obligation was in effect to carry out the functions of government, transmit to the central or provincial government any surplus revenue from the district after local expenses and any sum specially allocated to him had been paid and, in some cases, especially in frontier districts, to provide troops. Fraser, writing in 1821–2, states that lands held in tuyūl for the payment of military or other services paid nothing to the government. The holder took the proprietor's share of the crop, all government dues and anything else he could get when the land belonged to the government; if, however, the assignment was on the estate of a third person, the grant only extended to the government's dues.[98] Thus, the Maḥall-i Khamsa,

[96] Cf. The grant of a tax immunity for Amīr Dīzaj in Dehkhwārgān in 1827–8 (Nādir Mīrzā, p. 255), and also the grant from Muḥammad Shāh, dated 1836, to Ḥasan Khān Bāyburdī Qarāja Dāghī (Sarhang Bāyburdī, p. 264). [97] "Notes on a Journey From Tabríz", p. 5, note.

[98] *Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan*, p. 211.

with its hundred villages, together with its capital Zanjān, was, by the gift of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, the property of the governor, Faraj Allāh Khān, the chief executioner (*nasaqchī-bāshī*). It paid no revenue but furnished the king with 5,000 horsemen who were paid, fed and clothed by its produce.[99] Sheil mentions that a Hazāra chief visited Tehran in 1852 in the hope of obtaining an extensive grant of land for the settlement of a portion of his tribe at Jām under the engagement of protecting it from Türkmen inroads.[100] Sometimes, however, the obligation to provide troops was converted into a money payment.[101]

With the military reforms of Mīrzā Taqī Khān Amīr Niẓām in 1851, the obligation to provide troops ceased, at least in theory, to be the direct responsibility of the tuyūldār. Each village, district, or tribe was required to provide under the assessment (*bunīcha*) of the village a number of soldiers or government servants (*naukar-i daulat*) proportionate to the amount of its revenue assessment. The men served in theory for six months of the year and returned to their villages for the other six months. Their pay for the latter period was a charge on the village, as also was the small allowance paid to their families while they were away on service.[102] Further reforms were carried out by Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, who was appointed first minister or *ṣadr-i aʿẓam* on 12 December 1871 and held office until September 1873.[103] Subsequently, a decree stating that the army would in future be raised by conscription and the term of service be twelve years instead of life as heretofore was issued in 1307/1889–90, which laid down that one man for every 180 male Muslims in each village should be taken for military service and 150 tūmāns for every 180 non-Muslims, was also probably never fully operative. Nominally the law applied to all parts of Persia and all classes of the population with the exception of Christians, Jews and Parsees, peasants on crown lands, sayyids and ʿulamā, and the inhabitants of towns were subject to conscription. Some districts such as Yazd and Kāshān, because of the supposedly poor quality of their recruits, were also exempted.[104]

[99] J. Morier, *A Journey through Persia*, p. 262.

[100] F.O. 60: 169. Sheil to Granville, No. 29, Tehran, 5 March 1852.

[101] F.O. 60: 160. Sheil to Palmerston, No. 99, Isfahan, June 1851.

[102] ʿAbd-Allāh Mustaufī, I, pp. 91–2.

[103] He fell on 9 September 1873, but was reinstated the following day only to be dismissed again on 11 September.

[104] Zarrābī, *op. cit.*, p. 171. According to Morier, Arabs, Failīs and the people of Iṣfahān and Kāshān were exempt in 1809 (*A journey through Persia*, pp. 240–1). If the inclusion of Iṣfahān in this statement is correct, the exemption was not permanent. In 1850–1 Iṣfahān produced three regiments (Anṣārī, *Tārīkh-i niṣf-i jahān*, p. 150).

There had been in the first half of the century a Nestorian regiment. In the regulations drawn up in 1864 respecting the grievances of the Nestorians of Urmīya, it is stated that the Christians of Urmīya and Salmās, who had formerly provided a regiment, had been excused from military service at their own request and their taxes slightly increased (*British and Foreign State Papers* LXXIII (1881–2), p. 340).

With the growth in the regular army following the reforms of the Amīr Niẓām, the demand for recruits increased, and with it the harassment of the peasantry.[105] On receipt of orders for the enrolment of a regiment, the colonel, who was often a large landed proprietor, the local chief, or tuyūldār of the district, would, with his subordinate officers, tour the villages responsible for his recruits. The richer members of the community would often buy themselves off. Those enrolled, or their families, received grants, known as *khānavāra*, paid by their fellow villagers (the amount of which varied from district to district). They also received, in some cases, a payment known as *pādarāna*, which was made once only on enrolment. So far as the tribal cavalry were concerned, the chief responsible for their maintenance was paid a varying sum per man per annum. This was seldom paid in cash; it was usually deducted from the tribal revenue due to the government.

The tuyūl system, while it did not lead to the emergence of a landed aristocracy, supported the position of the tribal leaders, many of whom were tuyūldārs, and contributed to the power of the local landowners. As long as the central government was strong, the opportunity to convert tuyūls into private property was limited, but inevitably the grant of a tuyūl to a powerful and prominent individual, whether he was a tribal leader, landowner, military commander or government official, frequently enabled him to usurp possession of the land within, and on the borders of, his tuyūl.

Provided that the central government was strong, the abuses of the tuyūl system could be controlled, and it could even be argued that the system had certain advantages. To a large extent it relieved the government of the need both to establish a district tax administration and to transfer funds to and from the provinces. It also enabled the government to call upon auxiliary military forces in an emergency and obviated the need to maintain and pay in cash a large standing army. On the other hand it had the disadvantage that the troops were apt to disappear at harvest time and in the sowing season and were reluctant to serve on distant campaigns, and, more importantly, it placed power in the hands of others if the government was weak. Further, so far as the tuyūl was regarded as a temporary grant, its holder often made many exactions upon the peasants. These sometimes provoked the peasants to flight and occasionally to insurrection. It was, however, often when the central government was weakest that the tuyūl became most widespread. Geographical conditions – the obstacles to communication provided by the central desert and the very extent of the empire

[105] F.O. 60: 160, Sheil to Palmerston, No. 99, Isfahan, June 1851.

– made it difficult for the government to control the outlying provinces and the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes, and so the functions of government tended to devolve upon the tuyūldārs. On the other hand, so far as government officials tended to be extortionate, a powerful tuyūldār could, in some measure, protect the peasants residing on his land, but the advantage to them from this was offset by the element of subjection inherent in the system. By the late nineteenth century, under the weak rule of Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh, a large part of the country was alienated as tuyūls to his entourage and favourites, who performed no service in return. The main revenues of the state were thus stopped at source with no advantage accruing in return to the government. With the changes that took place in the administration of the country and in the concept of government resulting from the Constitutional Revolution, one of the first acts of the National Consultative Assembly was to abolish tuyūl tenures, which had outlived by that time any usefulness they may once have had.

Since rights over the land were often acquired and exercised in an arbitrary manner, it is not surprising that insecurity of tenure was a characteristic feature of the land system. This was further exaggerated by the fact that there was no regular system of land registration, except in the case of khāliṣajāt, which were entered in special registers. Royal grants were presumably registered in the central or provincial archives, but the registers were not open to public inspection and subsequent changes in the ownership of the property were not necessarily recorded. The title to private property rested, in the case of a royal grant, on a royal farmān, otherwise, if at all, on a title deed or transaction of sale witnessed by religious dignitaries. Sometimes titles were corroborated by a certificate (*istishhād-nāma*), also attested by religious dignitaries and local notables,[106] which might be further corroborated by a *raqam* or deed from a provincial governor or by a royal farmān. There was no regular provision for the cancellation of titles, and disputes over conflicting titles were common. The farmān relating to bankruptcies dated 1844 (referred to above, p. 466) mentions the validation of deeds of sale of real estate by the *dīvān-khāna*, but registration in the dīvān-khāna does not appear to have been mandatory.[107] Land disputes between private individuals were normally heard in the sharīʿa courts or referred for decision to a religious dignitary.[108]

There appears to have been some sporadic registration of sales and mortgages of land to foreigners. The farmān relating to bankruptcies, besides laying down procedures in the case of bankruptcy and the punishment of fraudulent

[106] Cf. "The case of Ḥājjī Nūr al-Dīn", pp. 55–6, 60–1. [107] Aitchison, p. 70.
[108] Cf. "The case of Ḥājjī Nūr al-Dīn", p. 59.

bankrupts, made provision for the registration of deeds of purchase and sale, bonds and other documents. Sheil reported an attempt in 1851 to exercise supervision over the registration of sales and mortgages in Rasht, Astarābād and Bushire, with the object of checking a growing desire by foreigners, mainly Russian subjects, to acquire landed possessions in Persia. It would appear, however, that in this case it was mainly property in towns that was at issue.[109] Engagements were taken from the *qāẓīs* in Bushire that they would not ratify any mortgage or sale, deeds of land, houses, or property without the cognizance of the governor. Renewed engagements to this effect were taken in 1854. In July 1867 the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs gave instructions that no landed property should be alienated to British subjects or the subjects of other nations. Further discussion took place in 1882.[110]

In theory the revenue administration was highly centralized. In fact, however, the government was often unable to place effective restraints upon the actions of the provincial governors, tuyūldārs and local magnates. All revenue matters went through the offices of the *mustaufī al-mamālik*, whose diwan was organized on a geographical basis. Each province was under a special *mustaufī* and the tax records of the districts and villages of the province were entered in the registers for that province. Separate departments dealt with crown lands, auqāf, and other special matters, including arrears (*baqāyā*).[111] The mustaufī in charge of each province prepared annually a statement of the income and expenditure of the provincial revenues, including the drafts made on the revenue. This would be completed before the New Year, signed by the mustaufī al-mamālik and the first minister, submitted to the Shah for approval, and sent to the province for action. The distribution of the village assessment (bunīcha) was made locally or by the provincial tax officials. Local expenses were defrayed by locally raised taxes (*tafāvut-i ʿamal*), usually levied as a percentage of the regular taxes, which varied from province to province. Any excess remaining in the provincial treasury after the payment of local expenses and of drafts drawn on the provincial revenue, was, in theory, remitted to the central treasury, unless the provincial governor farmed the province, in which case he kept the surplus. The provincial governor, on taking up his appointment and at the New Year, was required to make a "present" (pīshkash) to the Shah – as had been the practice under the Safavids. The amount of these presents, which formed a recognized part of the revenue, was regulated by custom. To fall short in their

[109] F.O. 60: 160. Sheil to Palmerston, No. 87, Tehran 10 May 1851 and enclosures.

[110] See further J.G. Lorimer, *Gazetteer of the Persian Gulf, ʿOman, and Central Arabia* (Calcutta, 1915), I, pt. II, pp. 1973–4, 2089–92.

[111] It would seem that the *vazīr-i baqāyā* was mainly concerned, as he had been under the Īlkhāns, with the collection of sums outstanding under *muqāṭaʿa* contracts and revenue farms.

amount was to lose office and to exceed was to increase in favour. Presents were also expected when the Shah visited the residence of an official, favourite or other person and on the occasion of royal "progresses". Similarly the great men of the court and provincial governors themselves expected to receive presents. To provide for these expenses the people were burdened with extraordinary exactions. Their occasional protests to the Shah against these exactions tended to be blocked by those who had provided presents. The tribal chiefs were similarly expected to transmit their tribute at the New Year.

Although in theory the mustaufīs could strike a balance of income and expenditure at any moment, in practice much confusion often prevailed. There was no audit. Further, the mustaufīs, among whom there was a strong hereditary tendency, tended to regard the account books as their personal property and so there was no regular government archive. Two further factors complicated the situation: the practice of making indiscriminate drafts on the revenue and of farming the revenue. Neither practice was new; both had been adopted from time to time by earlier dynasties. Officials and others, who had claims against the state, were commonly paid by drafts drawn on the revenue which they collected from the treasury, the local tax officials, the tuyūldārs or the revenue farmers, as the case might be. The practice of writing drafts on the revenue, which became increasingly widespread after the death of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, gave rise to repeated disputes. Drafts were sometimes drawn in excess of the revenue, as happened in the reign of Muḥammad Shāh. Their value was, therefore, nominal and the holders, unless persons of influence and able to insist on the payment of their claims before those of other persons, were glad to sell them at a discount of 70 or 80 per cent. The principal governors had their agents in Tehran to purchase the drafts drawn upon their province. The full amount of them would afterwards be charged in their accounts with the government, although only a small part of them might in reality have been paid.[112] The situation in the early years of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh was little better.[113]

Revenue farming had often been practised in earlier periods, partly because of the central government's inability to exercise control in outlying areas and partly for reasons of financial stringency. It became common in the nineteenth century for similar reasons. ʿAbbās Mīrzā, when governor of Āẕarbāījān, is said to have made some progress in abolishing the practice and fixing the revenues of the province on a systematic scale and enforcing their collection,[114] but his

[112] See further Lambton, "The case of Ḥājjī ʿAbd al-Karīm", in *Īrān and Islām*, ed. C.E. Bosworth (Edinburgh, 1971), p. 354, n9.

[113] Cf. Maḥmūd Farhād Muʿtamid, pp. 114ff.

[114] J.B. Fraser, *Travels in Koordistan, Mesopotamia, etc.* I, p. 8. Cf. Morier, *Second journey*, pp. 240–1.

reforms were limited and short-lived. Towards the end of the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh revenue farming was common throughout the empire. It was of two kinds. The first resembled the muqāṭaʿa contract of early Islamic times, according to which powerful landowners farmed the duty of their estates to prevent the vexatious interference of the subordinate officials of the revenue. The second, and more pernicious, was the system by which governors bid for their districts. From the latter part of the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh and under Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh this type of revenue farming became increasingly widespread because of the government's ever-pressing need for money. It was found at various levels: from the provincial governor, who would offer a lump sum at the New Year, or on appointment, for the taxes of his province, to the provincial and local tax officials, who farmed the taxes from the provincial governor in a similar fashion.

The general tax structure and broad division into first "fixed" taxes (known as *māl va jihāt* and later as *māliyāt*) and secondly extra levies and requisitions were largely the same as they had been under earlier dynasties, as also were the purposes on which the revenue was expended, namely the payment of the army, salaries of officials, pensions, and the upkeep of the royal court. The "fixed" revenue consisted of taxes on the land, animals, flocks, herds, shopkeepers, artisans and trade, revenues from crown lands, customs, rents and leases. Very little quantitative material on revenue matters appears to exist in either Persian or European sources, though an examination of the records of the mustaufīs would, no doubt, yield further information.

According to Malcolm the "fixed" revenue amounted in 1810 to some £3,000,000. Macdonald Kinneir, writing about 1813, gives a figure of some three million tūmāns for the total revenue and states that the land taxes and revenue from crown lands probably amounted to two-thirds of the total.[115] By the end of the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh the revenue had fallen to 2,081,532 tūmāns in cash while payments in kind were worth 379,217 tūmāns. The main constituents of the latter were 163,084 kharvārs (675 lbs each) of wheat, at 2 tūmāns each, 12,850 kharvārs of rice, at 3 tūmāns each, and 965 *mann* of silk at 6 tūmāns each.[116] It is not clear to what the fall in the revenue was due. It is possibly to be accounted for by the contraction in the area of the Persian empire and partly by deficiencies in the system of revenue collection. By about the middle of the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, despite the sharp fall in silk production in Gīlān, the revenue amounted to 4,361,660 tūmāns (or £1,744,664) in money, most of

[115] *A Geographical memoir of the Persian empire*, p. 47.

[116] India Office, L.P. and S/9, Vol. 53, Revenues of Persia ordered by the late Shah to be paid to the General credit of Government. Also quoted by Issawi, pp. 361–2.

which was from land tax, besides payments in kind in barley, wheat, rice, and silk, valued at 550,840 tūmāns (or £220,336).[117] The great famine of 1869–72 adversely affected the collection of revenue, especially from the southern, central and north-eastern provinces, which were the most severely affected and took several years to recover. Only in and after 1884 did the revenue from direct taxes surpass in nominal terms the revenue of the pre-famine years. Assessments, however, were not adjusted to the fall in the real value of the *qirān* (krān) or to the growth in agricultural production which took place in many districts. As a result by the late 1890s government revenue from direct taxes at constant prices had fallen compared to the pre-famine years. Curzon gives the budget for 1888–9, which shows an increase in nominal terms due to the depreciation in the silver currency, but not in real terms. The total revenue was calculated at 55,369,516 qirāns (10 qirāns = 1 tumān). Māliyāt contributed 54,177,740 qirāns (taxes paid in cash 36,076,757 qirāns, taxes paid in kind 10,100,933 qirāns and customs 1,119,776 qirāns), and revenue from other sources 1,191,776 qirāns.[118] By 1900 the total revenue had ostensibly risen to 7,000,000 tūmāns,[119] but the proportion of the whole formed by land tax was probably slightly less than had been the case earlier. In 1905, the year preceding the grant of the constitution, the total revenue was put at roughly £1,425,000. Māliyāt, which consisted mainly of land taxes, amounted to £800,000. The percentage which it formed of the whole had fallen, but it was still the largest single item and almost double the next highest item, which was customs.[120]

In the late 18th century or early 19th century the rate at which land tax was levied was alleged to have been 10 per cent of the produce. It was raised in the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh to 20 per cent, or one fifth, of all agricultural produce, or its value in money, when various additional cesses, which had been imposed to make good the deficiency of the revenue, had been compounded for a figure of 10 per cent of the produce.[121] According to a report by R.F. Thomson, dated 1868, the figure of 20 per cent was, as a general rule, somewhat exceeded and 25 per cent could be taken to be the average assessment (excluding dues levied on cattle and flocks and duties for provisions brought to market in the principal towns).[122]

[117] *Accounts and Papers* LXIX (1868), Persia, Report by Mr Thomson, Her Majesty's secretary of Legation, on the population, revenue, military force and trade of Persia, pp. 250–1. Extracts from this report are given by Issawi, pp. 364–6. [118] *Persia and the Persian Question*, II, pp. 480–1.

[119] F.O. 881:7364, *Report on the Persian army*, by Lt.-Col. H.P. Picot, January 1900, pp. 11–12.

[120] F.O. 416:26, App. (A) in Hardinge to Grey, London 23 December 1905, separate and confidential. [121] Cf. Fraser, *Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan*, p. 211.

[122] Report by Mr Thomson, *op. cit.*, pp. 250–3.

There was an abortive attempt under a decree of 1889–90 to return to the standard rate of 10 per cent on agricultural produce.[123] In practice, however, there continued to be great variety and inequality in the rate levied in different districts and on different crops.[124]

Land tax was assessed in cash and kind, as it had been formerly, in three main ways: by measurement (but there were no provisions for a cadastral survey of the country as a whole), as a proportion of the produce, or in a lump sum. The last was the most common. It had the advantage of avoiding annual visits by the tax collectors to assess the amount of the crop. Orchards were assessed by measurement or by the number of trees planted. Taxes paid in grain were normally paid at harvest time; taxes in cash in two or more instalments.

In districts not self-supporting in grain the tax, although assessed in cash and kind, was paid wholly in cash, the part assessed in kind being converted into cash at one of several prescribed rates of conversion. This was also sometimes the case in districts from which, owing to their remoteness, the removal of grain was impractical. Malcolm states that according to the general rule taxes ought to be paid in cash and kind in equal proportions. In practice, the proportion varied. About the middle of the century the proportion of the total paid in kind was rather less than one eighth, but there were many local variations. Some villages whose inhabitants were poor paid almost entirely in kind. Wealthy landlords on the other hand preferred to pay in cash in order to avoid the interference of minor government officials when they came to the villages to collect the revenue in kind.[125] From the point of view of the peasants, it was to their advantage to pay their taxes in kind. If the tax was demanded in cash, having small reserves, or no reserves at all, they were often forced to sell their produce immediately after harvest when prices were at their lowest in order to realize the cash to pay the tax. It was also in the government's interest to collect the tax partly in kind to supplement its stocks of grain from crown lands.

The assessments were not kept up to date. Once made an assessment tended to remain in force irrespective of changed conditions. It frequently happened that a village which had declined in prosperity and whose inhabitants had decreased on account of war, famine, sickness or some other cause, would be

[123] See further *Landlord and Peasant*, p. 169.

[124] Rawlinson's account of practice among the Mukrī Kurds in Sāūj Bulāgh quoted above shows something of the complexity prevailing. Ostensibly, he states, one tenth was the government's share of the crop. In fact, however, the revenue to be realised was distributed by the chief among the different districts at an average rate of 2 tūmāns per family and the minor chief or *āghā*, or the Bābā Amīra chief himself if he farmed his own land, was at liberty to apportion the assessment among his peasants ("Notes on a journey from Tabríz", pp. 35–6). Eastwick, writing in 1861, notes that the Parsees, apart from, and in addition to, the capitation tax levied upon them, paid more than Muslims (Report, *op. cit.*, p. 70).

[125] Malcolm, *History of Persia* II, 338–9.

over-assessed and conversely a village which had increased in prosperity or been newly developed would be under-assessed or even omitted altogether from the assessment. Broadly speaking, it would appear that the assessments made under previous dynasties remained in force in many districts under the early Qājār rulers. Mīrzā Taqī Khān Amīr Niẓām, Nāsir al-Dīn Shāh's first minister, carried out a new assessment in 1851, many alterations in the value of the land having by then taken place. There is, however, no evidence to show that the new assessment in fact covered the whole of the country. What happened at the local level, moreover, continued to have little relation to the rates authorized by the central government. Whenever the latter, or the provincial authorities, felt disposed to alter the amount of the taxes of a given district government assessors would be despatched to the district in question. Although they were supposed to perform their duty in accordance with the rates authorized by the government, great injustice was often done on such occasions, since the assessor would commonly over-estimate or under-value the taxes in proportion to the inducement paid to him.[126] Between about 1878 and 1882 a number of reports were compiled on the villages, lands and population of most of the provinces. These were presumably intended to prepare the way for greater efficiency in the assessment and collection of the revenue and the levy of troops, and in 1885–6 and 1889–90 decrees were issued with a view to unifying and reforming the assessments over the country as a whole.[127] These measures, however, proved abortive.

So far as assessments were made in a lump sum, changes in cropping or in the area under cultivation were not taken into account. The government, therefore, reaped no advantage from the increase in cash crops or from the expansion in the area under cultivation which took place in the second half of the 19th century. Similarly it was slow to adjust its demands to a decrease in production. Gīlān is a case in point. Before the decline in raw silk production which had resulted from the outbreak of silkworm disease in 1864, Gīlān ranked second to Āẕarbāījān in the amount of land taxes levied on its population on behalf of the central government. Although silk output decreased sharply in 1865 and 1866, the tax assessment remained unchanged. Many of the landed proprietors were consequently "obliged to sell their household furniture and jewelry to raise money wherewith to satisfy the demands of the tax-gatherer".[128] In 1867–8 the government reduced its assessment for Gīlān by about 20 per cent, but this was much

[126] Cf. Report by Mr Thomson, op. cit., 253.

[127] See further *Landlord and Peasant*, 167ff.

[128] *Accounts and Papers* LXVIII (1867–68), H.H. Ongley, Report . . . on the trade and commerce of Ghilan for the year 1866, p. 300 (quoted by Gilbar, "Persian Agriculture in the late Qajar period, 1860–1906", p. 40).

less than the decline in silk output. In 1869 William G. Abbott reported that the inhabitants of entire villages had abandoned their homes and sought refuge in shrines. In view of the likelihood of a popular commotion, further reductions were then made in the assessment (though these reductions were misused by the governor and no benefit reached the peasants).[129] In 1877 there was another reduction granted, again in response to a popular demand.[130]

Additional levies (*farᶜ*, *furūᶜ*, *ṣādir*, *ṣādirāt*) usually reckoned at so much per tūmān of the basic tax (*aṣl*), formed an important part of the total revenue demand. These were made on account of arrears, in response to some emergency or special need, or simply to meet the need of the state for more revenue without increasing the nominal rate of taxation. The tendency was for such additional levies to become permanent additions to the regular tax. On the other hand, remissions on account of natural calamities or in return for some special service were granted from time to time and these, too, occasionally became permanent.[131] Malcolm states that the sum derived from *ṣādir* was calculated at two fifths of the fixed revenue. In theory it was levied according to definite rules, each person paying in the same proportion as he paid the basic tax, but he alleges that the governors of provinces usually exercised an arbitrary discretion in collecting the ṣādir.[132] Although, as stated above, various additional cesses had been compounded not long before 1821 for a figure of 10 per cent and added to the regular taxes, the government nevertheless continued to make additional levies in capricious and arbitrary forms. Thomson reported in 1868 that "it is impossible to discover what people really do pay in excess of the fixed assessment. Some pretend that the irregular exactions amount to a sum equal to the legal assessments, and there does not appear to be any reason for supposing this is an exaggeration."[133]

Taxes were levied on the tribes according to the number of their cattle and flocks, or sometimes as a poll-tax or family tax. In some cases they paid pasture taxes.[134] Villagers also paid taxes on cattle, sheep and other animals (*marāᶜī*,

[129] *Accounts and Papers* LXV (1871), W.G. Abbott, Report . . . on the trade and resources of the province of Gilan for the year 1869, p. 236.

[130] *Accounts and Papers* LXXIV (1878), H.A. Churchill, Report on the trade and commerce of Ghilan for the year 1877, p. 693.

[131] Thus, in Astarābād there was apparently no assessment on the land, the tax having been remitted "from time immemorial as a set-off against the losses sustained by Turkoman spoilation" (*Accounts and Papers*, LXXI (1882), C.B. Lovett, Report on the trade and commerce of the province of Asterabad for the year 1881, p. 1069).

[132] *Op. cit.*, II, pp. 342–3.

[133] Report by Mr Thomson *op. cit.*, pp. 254–5. Cf. also P.M. Sykes *Report on the Agriculture of Khorasan*, p. 4ff.

[134] Malcolm states that for the most part the pasture lands allotted to the tribes were considered as payment in part for their military service (*History of Persia* II, p. 339. See also *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 158, 163–4).

mavāshī). Great variety prevailed in their levy. In Kāshān, for example, marāʿī was levied on sheep and goats at so much per animal which bore young and was in milk, and mavāshī, on cows, mules and asses at so much per head. Only those living in the village and benefiting from its grazing, water and firewood were in theory liable to these taxes. Anyone cultivating land elsewhere and grazing his flocks elsewhere was exempt from these taxes in the village in which he resided.[135] A poll-tax (*sarāna*) was also exacted. This had nothing to do with the poll-tax (*jizya*) sanctioned by Islamic law and levied on *ẓimmī*s, but, like *jizya*, it implied an element of subjection. In the middle of the century its levy seems to have been widespread. Thomson states that a poll-tax of one qirān was exacted from each male over 18 years of age but that the inhabitants of towns did not pay this tax.[136] In the villages of Kāshān sarāna was exacted from males from the age of fourteen.[137]

Among the extra levies made upon the villagers one of the most grievous was *suyūrsāt* (purveyance), which was claimed by officials travelling on government business. Its exaction was usually attended by violence and oppression. *Muḥaṣṣil*s (officials sent by the central government to the provinces on some business such as the collection of arrears of taxation or the investigation of some dispute) were the chief offenders. Government and other functionaries travelling to and from their posts were also a scourge to the countryside. *Mihmāndār*s, who conducted foreign envoys and other foreigners through the countryside, also claimed suyūrsāt. Referring to the practice, Morier states: "The villager groans under the oppression, but in vain shrinks from it; every argument of his poverty is answered, if by nothing else, at least by the bastinado."[138] An attempt in 1851 to abolish suyūrsāt, except for soldiers on the march, proved abortive. Under the decree of 1885–6, mentioned above, the village assessments were to be fixed according to the registers of the mustaufīs and the advice of a local council for provincial reforms. The tax was to be paid in monthly installments by the *kadkhudā*, and as long as it was paid the tax-collectors were forbidden to enter the village. Extraordinary levies were to be discontinued and the power to make levies to meet local expenditure was to be removed from the competence of the tax-collectors and referred to the local inhabitants. This decree was abortive. Extraordinary levies continued to be made and virtually no change took place in the collection of the taxes. Further, under a decree for the making of roads, issued in 1889–90, a new burden was laid on the village population, in

[135] Żarrābī, *op. cit.*, p. 91. [136] Report by Mr Thomson, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

[137] *Op. cit.*, p. 91.

[138] *A journey through Persia*, p. 37. Cf. also Fraser, *Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan*, pp. 88, 113, 115.

that all males from 16 to 50 years of age were bound to give a number of days free labour per annum on the roads; all pack animals had to be made available for the same purpose. Only those persons who had performed road service were to be given travel permits. Although there is no evidence that these regulations were operative throughout the country – road building proceeded extremely slowly, if at all – the fact that the government could in law exact services of this kind and, by withholding travel permits, tie the peasant, in effect, to his village further emphasized the subjection of the peasant.[139]

The various threads which went to make up the land tenure and land revenue systems of 19th-century Persia were not, all in all, very different from those which had constituted the medieval systems. The border line between the Qājār period and preceding periods was not clear-cut. That between the 19th and the 20th centuries is more definite, though there was no sudden break. The Constitutional Revolution marks, it is true, a break in theory, but in practice the change was less noticeable. The Qājār land system was rooted in the past. It was little touched by economic movements until the latter half of the 19th century when agriculture began gradually to be organized on a commercial basis to a greater extent than had been the case formerly. This development was accompanied by, or coincided with, some change in the composition of the landowning class, but it did not materially alter the status of the landowner or the social philosophy upon which the land system rested. A change in this was not to come until later. Further, although westernization had begun, the gulf between the westernized element of the population and the rest had not yet reached the dimensions it was later to attain. There was a contrast between the wealth and influence of the landowner on the one hand and the poverty and weakness of the peasant on the other, but they both lived in the same world. Society still derived its material wealth mainly from the land but the burden of taxation rested on the peasantry. Land ownership gave political, social and economic power, and the privilege it conferred was ratified (though not necessarily controlled) by association with the state. The local communities had no ties to each other. So far as they were joined to any centre of authority it was to the provincial or central government. This vertical organization of society, which had been a characteristic of the ʿAbbasid empire and had survived its fall to a greater or lesser extent, had played an important part in bringing the various local regions and communities, with all their diversity, within the general structure of successive empires and, perhaps, in preventing movements of revolt

[139] See further *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 167ff.

based on a sense of common interest. Movement meant disturbance, and so the object of government was not to foster individual initiative but to prevent social dislocation. The aim was stability and the enemy was whatever menaced the established order. The ideal of the medieval philosophers – the rule of justice which would ensure prosperity and a full treasury to provide for the defence of the realm – had become tarnished, and, perhaps, was no longer sought. On the one hand, the government, by failing to establish a regular and equitable distribution of taxation based on the varying extent, fertility and production of agricultural land, deprived itself of badly needed revenue, while on the other, it ignored the restraints which public interest required to be placed on the use of land. Further, by the various measures which it took to the disadvantage of the rural population, it deepened the gulf between the rural and the urban population. In short, the arbitrary nature of governmental power coupled with insecurity from natural causes – drought, insufficient rainfall, sudden storms, pests, earthquakes, disease – placed a check upon prosperity, while the insecurity of tenure of the peasants and the prevalence of crop-sharing prevented the full development of the resources of the land and of the potential of those who cultivated it, killing their initiative and preventing them from accumulating savings with which they could better their own position.

CHAPTER 14

THE TRIBES IN EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY IRAN

The contemporary social organization of individual tribal groups in Iran has recently been the focus of some detailed studies. Historical studies of the tribes have been few, however, and research into their social history has hardly begun. The available source material for such a social history is mostly written from a distance, by outsiders viewing the tribes with hostility or some other bias. For example, the information on the tribes that can be gleaned from sources such as Persian court chronicles, manuals and local histories, and from European agents' and travellers' reports, largely concerns such matters as taxation, military contingents, disturbances and measures taken to quell them, and inaccurate lists of major tribal groups, numbers and leaders. Economic and social organization are treated superficially if at all, and even for the last two centuries their basic features must be inferred circumstantially or deduced from later, more complete studies.

This chapter gives in the first instance a general survey, based on available source materials, of the distribution of the tribes and their political history as a "problem" for the Iranian government in the 18th and 19th centuries. The second part of the chapter attempts an analysis, on the one hand, of the processes of ecological adaptation and social and economic organization which may be considered to have contributed to the "tribal problem", and, on the other, of the development of different tribal groups during the period as the product of interaction between these various kinds of processes: ecological, economic, social and political.

At this point it should be made clear that the concept of "tribe" is notoriously inexact, and that this is particularly true in the context of Iranian history, where groups defined by a wide range of different criteria have been referred to as "tribes". Moreover, the tribal groups commonly comprise several levels of organization, from the camp to the confederation; again, different criteria define membership of groups at each level, and it is by no means agreed at which level the term "tribe" is appropriate. Definition is not aided by the Persian terminology, including as it does a variety of words of Turco-Mongol and Arabic origins (*īl*, *ʿashīra*, *qabīla*, *ṭāʾifa*, *tīra*, *uymaq*, *ulūs*), many of which have been used

interchangeably and without precision.[1] For example, although there has never been in Iran a simple correlation of tribes with pastoral nomads, the usage of several names of particular tribal groups would seem to suggest that there was. Thus, in various parts of the country, terms such as "Kurd", "Lur", "ᶜArab", "Shāhsevan", and "Balūch" are used synonymously with "tent-dwelling pastoral nomad", yet these names are also used, in other contexts, of and by tribal groups whose members are by no means all nomads or even pastoralists.[2]

Some of these difficulties are resolved, however, in a diachronic perspective, as will be shown below in the discussion of development and settlement processes among the tribes. For the moment, it is enough to note that in Iran at this period the economic life of most tribal groups was based on nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoralism, though they varied in the degree to which other activities (cultivation, hunting, gathering, raiding, trade) were practised; that a common basic feature of tribal organization was a combination of notions of egalitarianism, individualism, independence and primary loyalty to paternal kinsmen; and that groups so based, under conditions of comparatively dense population and political autonomy, evolved larger, frequently militaristic confederations, while under conditions of strong government control they developed very different "feudalistic" class structures.

Defined in broad terms, the tribal population of Iran during the 18th and 19th centuries probably varied between one and a half and three millions, forming from a quarter to a half of the total population, and predominating in frontier districts and in areas better suited to pastoralism than agriculture.[3]

The essence of the "tribal problem" has been summarized by Professor Lambton as follows:

> Control of the tribal element has been and is one of the perennial problems of government in Persia. All except the strongest governments have delegated responsibility in the tribal areas to the tribal chiefs. One aspect of Persian history is that of a struggle between the tribal element and the non-tribal element, a struggle which has continued in a modified form down to the present day. Various Persian dynasties have come to power on tribal support. In almost all cases the tribes have proved an unstable basis on which to build the future of the country.[4]

These observations apply particularly to the period from the fall of the Safavid dynasty to the rise of Riżā Khān. Throughout the period, aspirants to power relied on tribal support, while established rulers cultivated the tribes as

[1] A.K.S. Lambton, "Īlāt", pp. 1095–6.
[2] Cf. W. Rudolph, "Grundzüge sozialer Organization bei den westiranischen Kurden".
[3] Cf. Issawi, p. 20. [4] A.K.S. Lambton, *Islamic Society in Persia*, p. 6.

sources of revenue, military levies and agricultural produce, but also feared them as disruptive elements prone to raiding non-tribal society, to damaging crops, to armed opposition to government, and often to dynastic ambitions of their own. To deal with the problem, a variety of policies was pursued, the choice and effectiveness of which depended on the strength of government and the accessibility of the tribes concerned. Usually a form of indirect rule was attempted, whereby the tribes were allowed autonomy so long as they kept within certain bounds defined by the government. They were controlled by nominating their leaders, keeping members of the chiefly families as hostages, establishing marriage alliances between chiefly and royal families, executing dissidents, or fostering dissension between rivals for leadership or between neighbouring tribes. Stronger rulers, especially in the 18th century, practised wholesale transportation of tribal groups, a more drastic policy which could achieve several objects, not all of which were necessarily deliberate. Later rulers sought to assimilate the tribes to the rest of the population, and attempted to break the power of the tribes and to extend government control in the tribal areas by replacing the hereditary chiefs with local governors, by developing disciplined and non-tribal troops in the army, by improving communications, and in some cases by the forced settlement of nomadic elements. However, at times during the period, and almost continuously in some areas, government was unable to follow even indirect rule methods, and had to recognize that its claim to the allegiance of certain tribes was purely nominal or geographical. It might occasionally be able to mount a predatory military expedition whose sole aim was the collection of revenue.[5]

Many of these policies had been used with effect by previous rulers. Shāh ʿAbbās I, for example, was able to replace the Safavid dynasty's reliance on its waning charismatic appeal to the Qizilbāsh tribes, and tried to counter, by military and administrative reforms, the fatally weakening effect of persistent inter-tribal squabbles. Thus, he formed new non-tribal regular troops to balance the Qizilbāsh cavalry, and he broke up and relocated unruly tribes on a large scale. Among those said to have been dispersed in this fashion were the Qājār, Afshār and various Kurdish tribes. Most of them were from the northwestern parts of the country, which were systematically stripped of both settled and nomad population and turned into a "scorched earth" zone to keep the Ottomans at bay. Peasants and townsmen from Transcaucasia were sent to Iṣfahān, while

[5] Cf. F.G. Bailey, *Stratagems and Spoils*, pp. 149–51.

Khurāsān was repopulated with tribespeople as a defence against Uzbek and Türkmen raids.[6]

On the whole, Shāh ʿAbbās' successors did not continue his policy of resettling the tribes in new areas, so that the distribution of tribes at the beginning of the 18th century probably differed little from the situation at his death in 1629.

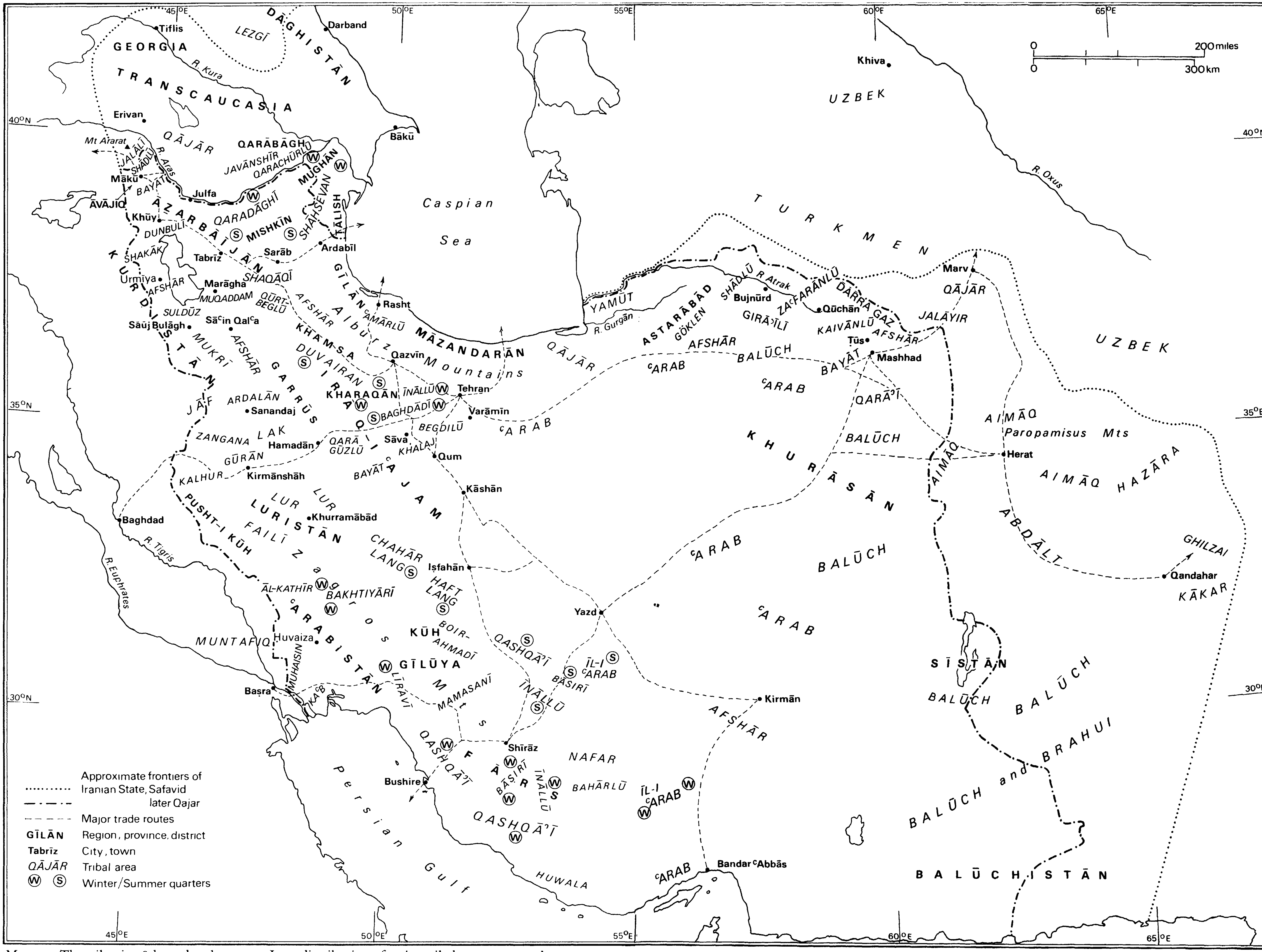
In the past, the tribes of Iran were commonly classified by language group or supposed ethnic affiliations. Such criteria are often inconsistent, misleading and little relevant to socio-political realities,[7] and it is more useful to enumerate the tribes according to their geographical locations. For this purpose, Safavid Iran may be divided into a number of regions, each characterized by somewhat different geographical features affecting the tribal population.

Khurāsān in Safavid times included much of present-day Afghanistan and Turkistan, inhabited by Sunnī tribes such as the Ghilzai and Kākar Afghans near Qandahar, the Abdālī Afghans around Herat, and the Tāymanī, Taimūrī, Fīrūzkūhī and Jamshīdī Aimāqs in the Paropamisus mountains, as well as the Shīʿī Hazāra to the east. In the mountain and plateau districts west and northwest of Mashhad lived Girāʾīlī and Bayāt Turks, and substantial groups of Kurdish nomads introduced by Shāh ʿAbbās. North of Mashhad, Afshār Turks held Darra Gaz and Ṭūs, while towards Marv were Qājār and Jalāyir Turks, and to the south Qarāʾī Turks and numerous ʿArabs. The province of Astarābād near the Caspian was occupied by the Sunnī Türkmen tribes, Yamūt and Göklen, and further groups of Qājār and Jalāyir. Beyond the northern frontiers of Khurāsān and along the Oxus lived the Sunnī Uzbeks.

In the arid southeast, the Balūch and Brahui tribes were more or less autonomous and remained so until the 19th century. The largest tribe near Kirmān was the local branch of the Afshār, but there were also several groups of ʿArabs; their flocks may have contributed to the fine quality wool of Kirmān which was of considerable commercial importance at the time.

Westwards, in the lusher mountain and coastal pasturelands of the province of Fārs, lived a heterogeneous collection of nomad tribes. Ranging north and south of Shīrāz were those groups, mainly Turks, which were soon to form the Qashqāʾī confederation. The Īl-i ʿArab, the Īnāllū, Nafar and Bahārlū Turks, and the Persian Bāṣirī, were not to achieve political unity as the Khamsa

[6] J.R. Perry, "Forced migration in Iran during the 17th and 18th centuries", pp. 205–8. The tribal groups east of the Caspian will be spelled Türkmen, while Turkmān refers to the Qizilbāsh tribe of that name. [7] cf. F. Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*, pp. 131–2.



Map 11. The tribes in 18th- and 19th-century Iran: distribution of major tribal groups around 1800.

confederation until the 19th century. On the southern coast were Sunnī ʿArabs such as the Huwala. To the west of the Qashqāʾī were the various Lurī tribes of the Mamasanī and Kūhgīlūya.

Between the high central Zagros and the torrid plains of ʿArabistān ranged the largest concentration of nomadic tribes in Iran, numbering up to a million people. Neighbours of the Kūhgīlūya were the Bakhtiyārī Lurs, whose chief had equivalent status to the four Vālīs, the main provincial governors. At Khurramābād, the Vālī of Luristān proper ruled over the Failī and an amorphous collection of other Lurs. The tribes of Luristān supplied the capital, Iṣfahān, and neighbouring districts with pastoral produce. In ʿArabistān ranged the Banū Kaʿb, Āl-Kathīr and Mullāʾī tribes, under a Vālī from the Sayyid Mushaʿshaʿ tribe, settled at Ḥuvaiza. Many of these ʿArabs appear to have been Shīʿī.[8]

The mountainous provinces of Kurdistān, Āẕarbāījān and the southern Caucasus are marked by higher rainfall and colder winters than other areas to the southeast of them. In spite of the excellent grazing grounds, pastoral nomadism is comparatively precarious in such conditions; most tribal groups in this region practised agriculture and tended to settle, or at least to spend the colder season in villages. The frontiers of the region were occupied by independent Sunnī mountain tribes, Lezgī and others to the north in Dāghistān, and the Kurds in the west. There were also numerous Kurdish tribes in the south, bordering on Luristān: the Zangana and Kalhur (partly Shīʿī) near Kirmānshāh on the main road between Baghdad and Khurāsān, and the Mukrī towards Sāūj-Bulāgh and Marāgha. The Ardalān of Kurdistān proper were under a Vālī at Sanandaj. Elsewhere in the region Kurds were intermingled with Turks, tending to become "Turkicized" in language, religion, and sometimes culture. Muqaddam Turks dwelled at Marāgha, and a large branch of Afshār held Urmīya, while north of Lake Urmīya were Kurdish tribes such as Shādlū (Shādilū) near Ararat and the Turkicized Dunbulī at Khūy. There were Bayāt Turks at Mākū, and a further branch of the Qājār in Erivan and Qarābāgh, where the Javānshīr Turks and the Qarachūrlū Kurds also lived. Mughān and Ardabīl were occupied by Shāhsevan, Īnāllū and Afshār Turks, and Mughānlū and Shaqāqī "Turkicized" Kurds.

Finally, the tribal population of the central region of ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam comprised for the most part fragments of former Qizilbāsh Turkic groups: Shāhsevan and Afshār in Khamsa, Qarāgūzlū near Hamadān, but also Sunnī Dargazīn and

[8] Perry, "The Banū Kaʿb: an amphibious brigand state in Khūzistān", p. 132.

Garrūs Kurds near the latter city. Other tribes in the vicinity of the Alburz range would seem to have been too small to feature in the records of the time.[9]

The general decay of government under the later Safavids was accompanied by other processes affecting the tribes. Chardin refers briefly to the Qizilbāsh nomads, but otherwise the tribes receive little mention in travellers' accounts from the later 17th century, which might seem to indicate a general decline in their importance.[10] Some chiefs were located in towns as provincial governors, and their tribal following probably also settled in the vicinity. In many cases, tribes lost their identity, broke down or were absorbed into others. The former Qizilbāsh tribes like Shāmlū, Ustājlū, Zulghadir, Tekkelū, Turkmān, which had been prominent in ʿAbbās I's reign, were no longer so after 1700, many of their surviving sections joining more resilient tribes such as the Afshār, Qājār and later the Shāhsevan. Three quarters of a century of peace on most of the frontiers rendered the army inexperienced and ineffective, and the tribal reserve militia could no longer be relied on.[11]

However, the peaceful conditions probably encouraged a growth in human and animal population among the pastoral nomads, and consequent overcrowding would have accentuated the tribal disorders and raiding which appear to have been spreading, leading in turn to a resurgence of nomadic tribalism at the expense of the settled population. This was occurring, it seems, particularly among the non-Turkic, non-Qizilbāsh tribal groups. The Bakhtiyārī and Lur had been raiding constantly in the Iṣfahān district in the mid 17th century,[12] but after 1700 these tribes became more loyal to the Safavids, and the troubles were concentrated among the Sunnī tribes which predominated on the margins of the empire. The Ghilzai made themselves independent at Qandahar in 1709, and the Abdālī followed by taking control of Herat in 1715, while raids and incursions by Balūch, Uzbek, Türkmen, Lezgī and Kurds intensified.[13]

The beginning of the 18th century found Iran in a condition of steadily worsening administrative and military decay under the weak and misguided Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain. The death throes of the Safavid dynasty began with the Afghan invasions in the south and east, culminating in 1722 in the siege and capture of Iṣfahān by Maḥmūd Ghilzai and his tribesmen, while the west and

[9] Sources for the above are in Lambton, "Īlāt", pp. 1102–3; L. Lockhart, *The Fall of the Ṣafavī Dynasty*, ch. 1; V. Minorsky (tr.), *Tadhkirat ul-Mulūk, a Manual of Safavid Administration.*

[10] Jean Chardin, *Voyages* v, pp. 300f.

[11] Père Tadeusz Juda Krusinski, S.J., *Histoire de la dernière révolution de Perse* II, pp. 160–2; see also R. Tapper, "Shāhsevan in Ṣafavid Persia", pp. 329–30.

[12] *A chronicle of the Carmelites in Persia* (London, 1939), I, p. 660; Lambton, "Īlāt", p. 1102.

[13] Lockhart, *Fall of the Ṣafavī Dynasty.*

northwest soon fell to the Ottomans and Russians, both newly freed from military commitments elsewhere to expand in the direction of Iran. Ghilzai rule was shortlived, however: after gaining control of the province of Khurāsān, in 1729 Ṭahmāsp Qulī Khān of the Afshār tribe subdued the Abdālī Afghans at Herat, and drove the Ghilzai from Iṣfahān, where he restored nominal Safavid rule in the person of Shāh Ṭahmāsp II. In the following years, he recovered all the lost territories.

Ṭahmāsp Qulī, or Nādir Shāh as he became in 1736, was a military adventurer rather than a tribal chief.[14] Several branches of his tribe, the Afshār, remained opposed to him, and his following consisted of Turks, Afghans, Kurds, and Lurs, whose basis for unity was military discipline and a common interest in plunder. Nādir himself had little time for civil administration. Although he established "security" in the country, his exactions, in the interest of his perpetual martial exploits, caused much of the settled population to emigrate. Having deposed his Safavid puppets, he broke away from the precedents of that dynasty, establishing Mashhad as his capital and favouring Sunnī tribes such as the Afghans and Türkmen. However, he revived elements of the tribal policy of his great Safavid predecessor, ʿAbbās I. Generally he governed the tribes through their own leaders; in some cases he appears to have nominated paramount chiefs, such as ʿAlī Ṣāliḥ Khān head of the Haft Lang Bakhtiyārī, Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān *īlkhānī* of the Zaʿfarānlū Kurds at Qūchān (Khabūshān), and Badr Khān Sārikhānbeglū founder of the Shāhsevan confederation in Mughān and Ardabīl.[15] To punish rebels and to discourage the Ottomans during his campaigns against them, he devastated the provinces of the Caucasus, Āẕarbāījān, ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam and Fārs. Numerous tribes were transported to the northeast, where they could be supervised, defend his metropolitan province, and supply pastoral produce and – most important – manpower for his army.

Thus, Nādir is said to have moved the following tribal groups on various occasions to Khurāsān and Gurgān: 12,000 Afshār families from several regions; the Qājār, Javānshīr, Turkmān, Muqaddam, Īnāllū and Shaqāqī from greater Āẕarbāījān; some ʿAmārlū from Kurdistān; the Qashqāʾī from Fārs; the Zand from ʿIrāq-i-ʿAjam; and some 13,000 families of Bakhtiyārī from Luristān. There were also large-scale introductions of Afghans from Herat and Qandahar.

[14] See Lambton, "The tribal resurgence and the decline of the bureaucracy in eighteenth century Persia", p. 109. See also Chapter 1 above.

[15] A.K.S. Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant*, p. 133; C.E. Yate, *Khurasan and Sistan*, pp. 181–2; Tapper, *The Shahsavan of Aẕarbaijan: a study of political and economic change in a Middle Eastern tribal society*, p. 443.

In all, over a hundred thousand tribal families are reported to have been moved to Gurgān and Khurāsān. In addition, from Kurdistān the Khwājavand were sent to Māzandarān and further ᶜAmārlū, to Gīlān.[16]

Nādir was assassinated in mid 1747. His reign left much of Iran, particularly the west, drastically depopulated. Many groups escaped transportation, slaughter and the ravages and requisitions of his campaigns by flight beyond the frontiers or into mountain or desert fastnesses. After his death, various exiles began to return, though it was not until Karīm Khān Zand came to power that serious attempts were made to restore the country's population. In 1748 or soon after, large numbers of tribespeople who had been sent to Khurāsān seized the opportunity to return to their original homelands. These included several branches of Afshār, the Shaqāqī, Javānshīr, and others from Āẕarbāījān, Zand and Bakhtiyārī from ᶜIrāq-i ᶜAjam and Luristān, and the Qashqāʾī from Fārs.[17] However, groups of Javānshīr, Kurd, Afshār, Bakhtiyārī, Shāhsevan, Ṭālish and Bayāt tribesmen joined Aḥmad Khān Abdālī at Mashhad on Nādir's death, and went to Afghanistan to form the main part of the Durrānī household troops. Eventually as Shīᶜīs they became known as Afshār or Qizilbāsh, settling and prospering in Kabul and elsewhere.[18]

Meanwhile Nādir's empire disintegrated under the conflicts of his successors. For two years his surviving close relatives strove against each other for control, before succumbing to the efforts of leaders of various other tribes, particularly those returned from exile. Āẕarbāījān was for some years occupied by one of Nādir's Afghan generals, Āzād Khān Ghilzai, against the opposition of most of the local tribes. In the central western provinces, Lurs, Laks and Kurds came together in their opposition to the Afghans, and were led first by ᶜAlī Mardān Khān of the Bakhtiyārī, then by Karīm Khān of the Zand Laks. Karīm won over the Bakhtiyārī, beat off the Afghans and set up his base at Shīrāz in Fārs. In the northeast, Muḥammad Ḥasan Qājār gained the support of the tribes of Khurāsān and command of the Caspian provinces, then in 1757 campaigned in Āẕarbāījān and the Caucasus, drove Āzād Khān out, and proceeded the next year against Karīm Khān in the south. The Zand leader, however, again won over his adversary's forces, and Muḥammad Ḥasan was killed early in 1759. Karīm Khān spent a few seasons in Āẕarbāījān reducing rebel leaders of the Dunbulī, Shaqāqī, and Shāhsevan tribes, and especially Fatḥ

[16] See Perry, "Forced Migration"; Tapper, *The Shahsavan of Aẕarbaijan*, pp. 438–9; L.S. Fortescue, pp. 311f.

[17] Tapper, *The Shahsavan of Aẕarbaijan*, pp. 445, 447, 449; P. Oberling, *The Qashqāʾi nomads of Fārs*, p. 37. [18] Chas. Masson, *Narrative* II, p. 297.

ʿAlī Khān Afshār, who controlled Urmīya and Tabrīz. He then established the comparative security and prosperity which lasted throughout his domain, with few interruptions, until his death in 1779.

While Āzād Ghilzai, Muḥammad Ḥasan Qājār, ʿAlī Mardān Bakhtiyārī and Fatḥ ʿAlī Afshār were tribal chiefs, Karīm Khān, like Nādir Shāh, was not. He was more of a bandit by origin; his own tribe, the Zand, amounted at most to a few hundred families, and his following was composed of a mixed collection of Lak, Lur, Kurd and Turk tribesmen. His final success in winning much of the western part of Nādir's empire was due less to tribal loyalties or military conquests than to diplomacy and luck.

Karīm Khān was renowned for his peaceful and equitable rule. He attracted back many of the craftsmen and others who had fled the country during the troubles of Nādir's reign and after. With the tribes, he employed similar policies to his predecessors, though on a smaller scale. The more important tribes were governed through their chiefs. Karīm Khān is said to have appointed, as the first paramount chief of the heterogeneous Qashqāʾī confederation, the leader of the Shādilū clan, who were among his early supporters, and to whom he is said to have granted permission to return to their original pastures in Fārs, his metropolitan province.[19] He sent punitive expeditions against rebel groups, and in one case carried out a wholesale transportation: in 1763, the Haft Lang Bakhtiyārī were moved to Qum and Varāmīn, and the Chahār Lang to Fārs. The Līravī of Kūhgīlūya too were resettled in Fārs, as were some Kurd and ʿArab groups, to supplement his standing army.[20]

He made no attempt to devastate or colonize his frontier regions, which remained virtually independent of him. In ʿArabistān, the Kaʿb under Shaikh Salmān, after long resistance, for a while accepted his sovereignty. Khurāsān served as a buffer state against the Durrānī Afghans of Qandahar, under whose influence Nādir Shāh's and Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain's grandson Shāhrukh reigned at Mashhad. To the northwest, the Ottomans and Russians were no threat, but rather were preoccupied with each other. The Trans-Araxian districts were only nominally in Karīm Khān's domains, while he managed to claim the allegiance of the Āẕarbāījānī chiefs by taking hostages to Shīrāz. Tabrīz was controlled through the Dunbulī chiefs of Khūy. Other prominent tribal groups in the region were the Afshār at Urmīya, the Javānshīr in Qarābāgh, the Shaqāqī and Shāhsevan near Ardabīl, the Qaradāghī, the Bayāt of Mākū, and the Muqaddam of Marāgha.

[19] O. Garrod, "The Qashqai Tribe of Fars", p. 296; Oberling, *The Qashqāʾi nomads of Fārs*, pp. 37f.
[20] Perry, "Forced Migration" p. 211; H.L. Rabino, *Les Tribus du Louristan*, p. 19.

Karīm Khān's death was followed by a further period of dynastic struggles and the usual accompanying insecurity and devastation in the countryside. In the south Zand chiefs fought for the succession, while elsewhere local leaders pursued their own ambitions. The most influential in the northwest were King Erekle II of Georgia, Fatḥ ʿAlī Khān of Darband, Ibrāhīm Khalīl Khān Javānshīr of Qarābāgh, and Ṣādiq Khān Shaqāqī of Sarāb, the last two being tribal leaders. In Māzandarān and Astarābād the Qājār chief Āghā Muḥammad Khān carefully united the dissident elements of his tribe; he then recruited support from the Türkmen of the Atrak, reduced most of the chiefs of Āẕarbāījān and by 1794 had defeated the Zands in the south. The next year, in the face of the Russian threat, he took swift measures to reassert Iran's hegemony over Georgia and other Transcaucasian areas, then in 1796 took Khurāsān from the Afghan puppet Shāhrukh, having severely chastised the Türkmen – these tribesmen had been allowed to move south to the Gurgān plain in return for their aid to Āghā Muḥammad and his father, but had not ceased their marauding expeditions into Khurāsān.

During the short reign of "the last and most brutal of Iran's tribal conquerors"[21] order was established in his domains through terror of his wrath and the might of his army, but the countryside was laid waste in his continual campaigns. He secured the allegiance of tribal leaders by keeping members of their families in or near Tehran, the new capital. A new axis for the state was established between Astarābād and the Khamsa region of ʿIrāq-i ʿAjam, and various tribal groups were brought into this area, especially into Māzandarān, which, while facing the Türkmen raids, remained the Qājār tribal centre. In early 1785, when he first took Iṣfahān and defeated the Bakhtiyārī tribes, he evacuated Zand, Afshār and Māfī tribesmen to Māzandarān. Later some Khwājavand Kurds, who had returned home to Garrūs, were brought back to Māzandarān; also to that district came other Kurds from Sāūj-Bulāgh, Girāʾīlī Turks from Khurāsān and Uṣānlū from Varāmīn. They were joined by 5,000 families of ʿAbd al-Malikī from the Qashqāʾī confederation, which was dispersed after opposing Āghā Muḥammad Khān. Another 2,000 Qashqāʾī families are said to have been sent to join the Bakhtiyārī; however, many groups from the Zand confederation, which was also broken up, joined the Qashqāʾī when they later reformed. To Qazvīn came 4,000 families of Chārdaulī Lurs from Fārs. The Īnāllū Shāhsevan taken from Mughān by Nādir Shāh, then located by Karīm Khān Zand in the Qazvīn area, were now joined as Shāhsevan by the Baghdādī, a

[21] G.R.G. Hambly, "Aqa Mohammad Khan and the establishment of the Qajar Dynasty", p. 173. See also Chapter 3 above.

large tribe brought from Baghdad by Nādir Shāh or Karīm Khān and now moved to Kharaqān and Sāva.[22]

On Āghā Muḥammad's assassination in Qarābāgh in 1797 there were further outbreaks of tribal dynastic ambitions in Āẕarbāījān, notably by Ṣādiq Khān Shaqāqī, but Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh established control of his uncle's realm and set about consolidating the state. He deliberately revived Safavid concepts of the absolute and irresponsible power of the sovereign.[23] No warlord, he devoted himself rather to civil administration and court life, and to riding and hunting, the traditional tribal alternatives to warfare, and left the active generalship of his numerous campaigns to his heir, ʿAbbās Mīrzā.

A major threat to the stability of the state and peace in the countryside was the tribal system, which had both caused and thrived on the disorders of the previous century. The tribespeople were a valued source of revenue and irregular cavalry, but leaders of larger tribes could withhold their dues, while in the more remote regions, particularly among Sunnī and non-Turkic groups, virtual autonomy prevailed. Seeing the hereditary chiefs, and the fanatical devotion with which they were regarded in many cases, as a central feature of the tribal system, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh determined to destroy or at least to limit the chiefs' power. The policies he initiated to this end were continued by his successors.

Like previous rulers, Fatḥ ʿAlī kept the chiefs or their relatives near him as security for the good behaviour of their followers. At the same time, tribal leaders used to have their representatives at court, to keep them informed of matters concerning them. Also, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh created a wide network of marriages linking his family with those of the important tribes.[24] In addition, he took advantage of the inability of the tribal leaders to unite, and of the endemic state of rivalry in the chiefly families and jealousy between different groups in a region. The principle of *divide et impera* was widely practised. When necessary, punitive expeditions were sent, a force recruited from one tribal group being used to chastise another, often their traditional enemies. Rebel chiefs were arrested, often by deceit, and many were executed. The Qājār rulers, further, themselves appointed *īlkhānīs* and/or *īlbegīs* over the more important tribal groups, although they usually had to nominate individuals acceptable to their tribesmen, most often the hereditary chiefs. Recognized chiefs were expected to

[22] Oberling, *The Qashqāʾi nomads of Fārs*, pp. 42–3; *idem*, *The Turkic Peoples of Iranian Aẕerbaijan*, p. 77; Lambton, "Ilāt", p. 1104; Z. Ardalān, "Niẓām-i khānavādagī dar īl-i Shāhsevan", in H. Zarrīnkūb (ed.), II, p. 133; E. Aubin, *La Perse d'Aujourd'hui*, p. 95; A. Mustaufī, *Sharḥ-i ẕindagānī-yi man* III, pt. 2, pp. 299–301; H.D. Napier, "Report on a journey Isfahan-Hamadan-Saveh-Tehran". [23] Lambton, "Persian society under the Qājārs", pp. 127f.

[24] Cf. Lisān al-Mulk Sipihr, *Nāsikh al-tavārīkh* I, pp. 313–39.

collect and pay the taxes, to maintain order and organize military levies, which were due both to the Shah and often to the provincial governor as well. Irregular tribal levies continued to form the main body of the army, though attempts were made to introduce more regular disciplined troops.

Some of the tribes were broken up and others relocated. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh is said to have brought the Duvairan and Afshār-Duvairan tribes from Mughān and Ardabīl to Khamsa, where they joined the local Qūrtbeglū; together with the Baghdādī and Īnāllū of Qazvīn, these tribes formed a second Shāhsevan confederation. The Chārdaulī tribe were now sent to southern Āẕarbāījān, ousting Afshār tribespeople of Ṣāʾin-Qalʿa, who had to move to Urmīya. The policy of forced migration to the metropolitan area was continued under later rulers.[25] The tribal list given by Jouannin indicates that already by 1800 the tribes of Iran were in a state of extreme dispersal, and Morier also observed that, apart from the ʿArabs, whose chiefs were still feared, "the different tribes are now so much spread throughout the provinces, that they have almost lost that union which could render them formidable".[26]

In fact, dynastic ambitions on the part of the tribes ceased to be realistic with the advent in Iran of Great Power rivalry, whereby the Qājār succession was virtually guaranteed. This new factor also gradually brought to an end the Qājārs' own military endeavours on the frontiers, and hence limited their ability to provide the tribal militia with a legitimate source of plunder. Thus, with the advance of the Russians in the Caucasus, Iran's northwestern frontiers were contracted. During the two Russian wars, ending in the Treaties of Gulistān (1813) and Turkmānchai (1828), a major preoccupation of the Shah was to ensure the continued allegiance of tribes on both sides of the Aras. ʿAbbās Mīrzā succeeded in bringing various tribes south of the Aras and settling them in Āẕarbāījān, such as the Turkic tribes Airumlū in Āvājīq, and Qarapāpākh and Shams al-Dīnlū in Suldūz, and several Kurdish and Turkic groups now included among the Qaradāghī and Shāhsevan. Migrations across the frontier in both directions appear to have continued after 1828, and also occurred extensively among Kurds on the Ottoman frontier.[27]

The northeastern frontiers were a major problem for the early Qājārs. They carried on constant military activity both in their attempts to regain Herat and

[25] Fortescue, *op. cit.*; Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 140–2; Oberling, *Turkic Peoples of Iranian Aẕerbaijan*, p. 77.

[26] A. Dupré, *Voyage en Perse* II, pp. 452f.; J. Morier, "Some Account of the Íliyáts, p. 236.

[27] J.B. Fraser, *A Winter's Journey* I, p. 404; Z.V. Togan, "Azerbaycan", II, pp. 115–16; Oberling, "The Tribes of Qarāca Dāġ"; *idem.*, *Turkic Peoples of Iranian Aẕerbaijan*, pp. 63f., 72f.; Aubin, *op. cit.*, p. 78; Tapper, *The Shahsavan of Aẕarbaijan*, pp. 462–82, 507–9.

the eastern parts of Afghanistan, and against the Türkmen and other slave-raiders, whose expeditions depopulated Khurāsān, penetrating at times as far as the vicinity of Iṣfahān, and seriously disrupting the important trade of the northeast. British protection of Afghanistan brought an end to Iranian efforts in that direction in the 1850s, and Russian victories in Turkistan later in the century terminated raids from that quarter, but within Iran the nomad sections of the Yamūt Türkmen continued to resist domination by the Qājārs into the 20th century.

Other tribal groups in Khurāsān, the Kurds of Qūchān and Bujnūrd, and the ʿArabs, Aimāq, and Balūch towards the south and east of the province, were more amenable to the authority of the government. The Balūch *sardārs* of Sīstān and Balūchistān had, under the earlier Qājārs, evaded all but trifling payments to the government, but they now saw more of the tax officials, though they otherwise maintained considerable autonomy until the 1920s. The Mamasanī and Kūhgīlū Lurs were pacified by 1882, and authority was also extended over the ʿArab tribes of Khūzistān during Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's reign. The *Vilāyat* of the Ardalān Kurds was effectively taken over in the 1860s, and the Kurds of Kirmānshāh were by 1907 administered by the Kalhur *īlkhānī*. On the other hand, the settled Lurs under the Vālī of Pusht-i Kūh were inaccessible enough to remain independent during Qājār times, as were the nomad Lurs of Pīsh-i Kūh and also most of the Kurds of western Āẕarbāījān, the location of the abortive Kurdish rising under Shaikh ʿUbaid-Allāh in 1880.

In the second half of the 19th century, during the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, the power of many other tribal leaders was further weakened. Some were replaced by local government officials. Security in the country generally improved, and raiding was suppressed. In many areas, nomadic elements were settling in increasing numbers. This tendency was strong, as always, in Āẕarbāījān, where the only major tribal group to remain nomadic was the Shāhsevan of Mishkīn, who retained comparatively temperate winter quarters in Mughān and were not yet tempted to exchange their tents for more substantial dwellings. Settlement was also widespread among groups recently introduced to the north-central region, between Māzandarān and Khamsa.

Soon after 1900, Aubin held that ethnic and tribal identities were losing their importance in a general increase of national consciousness; the only exceptions to this process of integration were the small religious minorities, the larger tribes and those which were remote from the centre or could take refuge in the mountains, though none of these could escape the royal power completely.[28] In

[28] Aubin, *op. cit.*, pp. 177–8.

fact, this general impression of settlement and detribalization was superficial and deceptive. The conduct of the administration in some tribal areas, so far from undermining the system, served rather to accentuate its evils. For one thing, the Iranian army had little to do in the latter part of the 19th century, as in the period two centuries before. It was lacking in experience and had deteriorated in quality since the introduction of "disciplined" troops. The nomad tribes remained the only effective militia, but they could be relied on only when defending their own territory.[29] Tribal levies, which had been drawn from the families and retinues of the chiefs, were now unemployed for long periods, and increasingly turned their energies to banditry. At the same time, the main emphasis of administration being on the collection of revenue, in some areas the demands of officials – including the appointed chiefs – were so oppressive, extortionate and arbitrary that ordinary tribesmen sought the security of joining the most effective of the local brigands, thus forming new, non-tribal groupings under unofficial leaders. Meanwhile the official chiefs themselves, whether through assimilation to the government bureaucracy or through detention as hostages, became urbanized and estranged from the majority of tribesmen, and could no longer exercise direct control over them.[30]

This was particularly the case in some frontier areas of Kurdistān, Āẕarbāījān, Gurgān and Khurāsān, where the government of the later Qājārs appeared to foster both nomadism and tribalism. In the territories of the Kurds, Qaradāghī, Shāhsevan and Türkmen, where the nomads had continued for much of the 19th century to cross the Ottoman or Russian frontiers seasonally for grazing purposes, a policy of maintaining a frontier strip of endemic "tribal disorder" seems to have been tacitly revived at the end of the century as a defence against possible incursions. Local authorities did little to curtail raiding activities there, and indeed were sometimes said to be reaping a share of the proceeds. When punitive expeditions were sent, they frequently chastized not the real culprits but some more accessible group. Often it was only when the tribesmen raided across the frontier and the neighbouring power complained, that the Iranian administration took measures, usually half-hearted. In extreme cases, such as with the Shāhsevan of Ardabīl and Mishkīn in 1860, a programme of enforced settlement was initiated, but without permanent effect.[31]

The tribes on the northwest and northern frontiers, preoccupied with a near-anarchic situation of generalized brigandry, posed no major threat to security in

[29] cf. Fortescue, *op. cit.*, p. 312.

[30] Tapper, *The Shahsavan of Aẕarbaijan*, chapters 8 and 9; cf. Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant*, pp. 161f., and Oberling, *The Qashqā'i nomads of Fārs*, chapter 9.

[31] Tapper, "Nomads and Commissars in the Mughan steppe: the Shahsevan tribes in the Great Game", in *idem.* (ed.), *The Conflict of Tribe and State in Iran and Afghanistan.*

the period before the first World War, except at a local level. Only rarely did any of them unite in groups of more than a few thousand warriors under a leader with ambitions on a national scale, on occasions such as the Kurdish revolt of 1880 already mentioned, and the support given to Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāh against the Nationalists, by the Türkmen and by the union of some Qaradāghī and Shāhsevan tribes under Raḥīm Khān Chalabiyānlū. None of these lasted more than a few months. It was otherwise with the large and powerful tribal confederations of the central and southern Zagros, the Bakhtiyārī and Qashqāʾī, whose leading families were among the most influential in the country and, whether among their tribesmen or in Tehran, played an increasingly important part in political affairs of the later Qājār period.

The Bakhtiyārī tribes, numbering up to 50,000 families, mostly nomads, were the source of much trouble to the government, and were never wholly brought under control. Their chiefly families were constantly split by rivalries, a factor which the government was able to exploit. In the first half of the 19th century, the Bakhtiyārī chief Muḥammad Taqī Khān carried out various measures beneficial to the tribes, but excited the jealousy of the governor of Iṣfahān, and was arrested by deceit in 1841. Bakhtiyārī influence grew under Ḥusain Qulī Khān, who was appointed the first official Īlkhānī in 1846. After his assassination in 1882, his successors continued to dispute the leadership and the inheritance of the considerable landed property which he and his brothers had accumulated. With the discovery of oil in their territory, the main contenders for leadership were able to compose their differences and play a deciding role in the restoration of the Constitution in 1909, and they also dominated the government in the period immediately before the first World War.[32]

In Fārs, the Qashqāʾī confederation emerged under Jānī Khān early in the 19th century, and his successors as Īlkhānīs of the Qashqāʾī rivalled the family of the merchant Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm at Shīrāz for influence in the province. This rivalry was exploited by the Qājār government to prevent an alliance (such as was nearly formed in 1247/1831–32) which might threaten their own position. In 1278/1861–62 the government created the Khamsa confederation from the Īl-i ʿArab, Īnāllū, Bahārlū, Nafar and Bāṣirī tribes, under the leadership of Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm's grandson Mīrzā ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān Qavām al-Mulk, to balance the Qashqāʾī power in Fārs. The Qashqāʾī were stricken by the famine of the 1870s, their numbers falling from around 30,000 to under 15,000 families, many sections joining the Bakhtiyārī or the Khamsa, but they became powerful again

[32] Gene R. Garthwaite, *Khans and Shahs*.

under Ismāʿīl Khān Ṣaulat al-Daula. During the Bakhtiyārī hegemony, which had the support of the Qavām al-Mulk and the Khamsa tribes, Ṣaulat al-Daula made a pact with the Vālī of Pusht-i Kūh and the ʿArab Shaikhs of Khūzistān, but this alliance came to nothing. The settlement of the Bahārlū, Īnāllū and Nafar, initiated by the government, was largely complete before 1900. The Īl-i ʿArab and Bāṣirī tribes, and the majority of the Qashqāʾī, continued to be nomads.[33]

Government control over the tribes weakened, in frontier areas before the turn of the century, elsewhere during and after the Constitutionalist régime. In most tribal areas, the period from the 1890s to the 1920s was one of anarchy, known as *khānkhānī* or *ashrarlikh*. Some tribal chiefs managed to maintain a degree of local stability within the general turmoil, but other areas were simply battlegrounds for rival brigands, where raiding went unchecked, taxes were not collected, trade was disrupted, and farming peasants were forced to leave land and village to take refuge in town or among the brigand leaders' retinues. At the same time, measures had already been undertaken to establish the infrastructure necessary for the ultimate control of the tribes: a telegraph network was spreading, roads were improving, and plans were made for railways. There were occasional gleams of light, as when a small but well-disciplined force under Yeprem Khān and Sardār Bahādūr Bakhtiyārī dealt piecemeal with the Qaradāghī and Shāhsevan rebels in 1910,[34] to show that, at the end of the Qājār dynasty as at the beginning, it needed only a strong leader to subdue the tribes, which were as incapable as ever of uniting against determined military action.

The foregoing account, following the main emphasis in the sources, has summarized tribal political history in the post-Safavid period in terms of the way successive rulers dealt with the "tribal problem": how both to make use of and to control the warlike tribal elements in the population. For the most part, only the activities of the major tribal groups and their leaders have been discussed. Indeed, as stressed earlier, the sources rarely deal specifically or in reliable detail with the basic social and economic organization of tribal communities, and mention individual tribes only when prominent in supporting or opposing the government, when involved in inter-tribal disorders, or when transported from one region to another.

The general view of tribal society among contemporary writers contrasted it with settled urban society, the civilized Islamic ideal. While the city was the

[33] Oberling, *The Qashqāʾi nomads of Fārs*; *id.*, the *Turkic Peoples of South Iran*.

[34] Tapper, "Raiding, reaction and rivalry: the Shahsevan in the Constitutional period".

source of government, order and productivity, the tribes had a natural tendency to rebellion, rapine and destruction, a tendency which might be related to the starkness of their habitat and its remoteness from the sources of civilization, and also to the under-employment inherent in their pastoral way of life. Such a view has some justification, but it is superficial and oversimplified. A better understanding of the nature of tribal political organization, and of the relations between tribal and non-tribal society, can be sought in a closer examination of the social and economic basis of the tribal system. For this, the sparse information in contemporary records may be interpreted through the insights gained from more recent studies of tribal and nomadic societies.

Many observers have noted how pastoral nomadism in Iran was closely related to geography and ecology. The terrain and climate made much of the country uncultivable under pre-industrial conditions, and suitable only for seasonal grazing; as only a small proportion of such pastures could be used by village-based livestock, vast ranges of steppe and mountain were left to be exploited by tent-dwelling nomads. Variations in terrain and climate influenced the kinds of animals herded and the length and type of nomadic movements. The main herding animals in most of Iran were sheep and goats, the former predominating in more favourable regions and the latter in more arid. There were further variations in transport animals: camels (dromedaries, Bactrians and their hybrids), donkeys, and horses – the latter kept formerly for military, later chiefly for prestige reasons, often at great expense and in unsuitable conditions.

With regard to migrations, in much of Iran, especially the western half, nomads could predict with some reliability where and when rain would fall, so that movements of people and animals took on a regular form from year to year, typically involving a "vertical" transhumance, between alpine *yailāq* (summer quarters) and lowland *qishlāq* (winter quarters), in response to seasonal variations in temperature rather than rainfall, a fact reflected in the terms *sardsīr* (cold region) and *garmsīr* (warm region) used in southern and western Iran as equivalents of yailāq and qishlāq. Such areas were able to support a relatively dense animal and human population. The distances they migrated depended at least partly on the distance between available mountain and plain pastures, and varied from a few days' journey each year, to several weeks and hundreds of miles. In the eastern and southeastern regions, where the time and place of rainfall were less predictable, it was water, not temperature, which ultimately controlled the nomadic movements. In many areas, however, there were departures from these patterns of movement, due to the nomads' involvement in agriculture or other economic activities.

The basic corporate interests of nomads, as Barth has argued, lead to certain forms of social and political organization.[35] Thus, efficiency in herding requires the pooling of labour resources among households, which therefore co-operate in herding units. In most tribal groups in Iran these averaged four or five tent-families, rarely enough to form a separate camp. In areas with lusher and more predictable grazing, and hence denser population, competition for pasture and considerable inter-tribal contact, there is a need to control access to pasture, keep outsiders away and distribute grazing among insiders, which is met by the allocation of grazing rights to groups with membership limited by clearly defined rules. The more predictable the grazing, the smaller such groups may be, and occasionally (as with the Shāhsevan of Mughān) small groups such as herding units and even individuals may have rights to specific pasturages to which they can return year after year in expectation of good grazing. In more arid, variable and hence sparsely populated areas, nomads need to be free to move "horizontally" over broader territories within which there is a reasonable chance that rain will fall, green the steppe and fill the wells – though even here there were well-defined territories and fairly regular movements. With denser population and extended migrations, and particularly where the routes passed among non-tribal villages, as in much of Fārs and Kurdistān, the vulnerability of nomad dwellings and animal property necessitated bodies of armed men organized for defence. In such conditions, moreover, movements and grazing patterns of different tribes must be ordered on fixed schedules and controlled by some authoritative leader. Where the migration routes were shorter and seasonal grazing grounds adjoining or nearly so, as with the Türkmen in Gurgān and many Lur groups, such problems did not arise to the same extent, and this was also true of the more thinly populated regions of the southeast.

Camps (*khēl*, *māl*, *oba*) varied considerably in size, depending partly on the need for defence, and the extensiveness of the pastures, but also simply on the gregariousness of the nomads. The usual size was 20 to 30 tent-families, but camps of over 100 tents were sometimes observed. Camps were led by elders (*rīsh safīd*, *āq saqal*).

The structure of nomadic groups was affected by cultural features common to the area. Thus, given the legal and cultural emphasis of the Islamic Middle East, the pasture-holding groups among Iranian nomads were usually based on descent from a common paternal ancestor, and most marriages took place between members of the group. These pasture-holding descent groups (*aulād*,

[35] F. Barth, "Nomadism in the mountain and plateau areas of South West Asia", UNESCO *Symposium on Arid Zone Problems* (Paris, 1960), Paper no. 16.

korboh, *göbek*, *hoz*, *tīra*) ranged from 20 to 200 tents and formed one or more nomadic camps. However (to judge from recent nomadic studies) there were variations in the structure of sub-divisions of these groups, such as camps and herding units, apparently because the strength of the patrilineal and patriarchal principles varied. In the Bāṣirī, these smaller groups were based on a variety of ties of kinship and affinity, while in the Shāhsevan, Kurds, and Türkmen they were normally smaller replicas of the larger patrilineal descent group. Similarly, although households were all marked by the common principle of individual ownership of animals, their size and composition varied. Among the Bāṣirī and other groups of southern Iran, a man received his share of animals and set up an independent household on marriage, so that households were small and most often based on nuclear families. Among the Türkmen and Shāhsevan, on the other hand, a man did not separate from his father until he had children capable of work, and so households tended to be larger and patriarchal. The Kurds appear to fall between these extremes. In any case, the common estimate of five persons per household is probably far too low, even in the Bāṣirī case where Barth records an average of 5.7, while in the Shāhsevan it is 7.3.[36]

The basic political groups, the tribes (*ṭāʾifa*, *īl*), typically numbered from 500 to 5,000 tents. Some tribes claimed common descent as a "clan", but more often they were composed of heterogeneous elements, the essence of whose unity seems to have been allegiance to a chief (*kalāntar*, *tushmāl*, *khān*, *beg*), who, with such a following, had the power and influence to deal with local and perhaps national authorities on terms of mutual respect. These were the "tribes" which composed the Khamsa, Qashqāʾī, Bakhtiyārī, Qaradāghī, Kūhgīlū, Mamasanī and other confederacies, and they correspond also to what I have called "tribal clusters" in the Shāhsevan of Mughān.[37] Often the chief found it convenient to recognize sections (*tīra*, *ṭāʾifa*) of his tribe, numbering from 50 to 1,000 families, each led by an appointed headman (*katkhudā* or *kadkhudā*); sometimes the sections coincided with the pasture-holding descent groups, and sometimes they formed nearly autonomous "sub-tribes". Finally, the confederacies (*īl*, *ʿashīra*), led by an Īlkhānī or Īlbegī, numbered from 2,000 to 20,000 tents; larger unions seldom lasted long.

These various groups formed on the basis of ecological, economic, cultural or political factors. However, other processes of group dynamics, as yet little understood, appear to have operated to produce two kinds of "moral commu-

[36] Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*, p. 12; *id.*, *Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan*, pp. 25, 38; W. Irons, *The Yomut Turkmen*; Tapper, *Pasture and Politics*, pp. 44–5.
[37] Tapper, *Pasture and Politics*, pp. 119f.

nity" among the nomad tribes, which usually coincided with one or other of the groups already analysed.

The first, a primary community of between 15 and 50 but averaging 20 to 30 tents, may be universal among the nomads. Barth implies that throughout south Iran this community is the main camp group, of variable structure but usually a subdivision of the pasture-owning descent group.[38] Among the Shāhsevan too, such a community (*jamāʿat*, *oba*) is the main migratory camp, but here it also usually coincides with both a descent group (*göbek*) and a tribal section (*tīra*); moreover, it is the focus of the main religious rituals. The Türkmen *oba*, the northern Kurd *oba*, the Bakhtiyārī *māl*, and the southern Kurd *khēl* seem also to be communities of this kind. Probably they were the "communities" of which 19th-century observers like Morier write.[39]

The second kind of community is a named group of from 50 to 500 or more tents, but averaging a few hundred, who occupy a distinct area of pasture and usually trace common descent and origins. As the Shāhsevan ṭāʾifa, the Jāf Kurd tīra, the Türkmen īl, and perhaps the Bakhtiyārī ṭāʾifa, this community coincides with a political group under some kind of leader; though this is not the case with the Bāṣirī tīra, which has no political unity at all. The essential features of such communities are that around 90% of marriages take place within them, that members share a number of cultural symbols which are held to distinguish them, and that they exhibit great continuity as named groups over the generations.[40]

These two kinds of moral community may have been the basic constants of tribal nomadic society in Iran, where there was so much variation in the structure, size and composition of other groups, formed on other principles. They are clearly based on the kind of "group feeling" Ibn Khaldūn held to be characteristic of tribal organization (see below), and they are also consistent with the idea of Iranian tribalism as based on notions of egalitarianism, individualism, independence and loyalty to paternal kinsmen; cultural principles which were otherwise belied by the political facts of strong autocratic chiefship and heterogeneous tribal confederations.

Before chiefship and confederation are considered, there are further implications about nomadic society that can be drawn from the nature of pastoralism. In

[38] Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*, pp. 25, 49.

[39] Barth, *op. cit.*, pp. 25, 40; *id.*, *Southern Kurdistan*, pp. 38f.; B. Nikitine, *Les Kurdes*, p. 149f.; Irons, "Nomadism as a political adaptation: the case of the Yomut Turkmen", pp. 640f.; Tapper, *Pasture and Politics*, *passim*; Morier, "Some Account of the Iliyáts", pp. 238, 241. Similar communities exist among nomads elsewhere in the Middle East, see Richard Tapper, "The organization of nomadic communities among pastoral societies of the Middle East", pp. 43–65.

[40] Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*, pp. 50, 59, 68; *id.*, *Southern Kurdistan*, pp. 36f.; Irons, "Nomadism", pp. 641f.; Tapper, *Shahsavan of Azarbaijan*, pp. 696–716; *idem*, "Nomadic communities".

Iran as elsewhere, it was a specialized form of production, and never the sole source of a community's subsistence needs. Pastoral nomads were dependent on settled society. They needed many of the products of town and village, which they might acquire by trade, exchanging their animals or animal produce directly or indirectly for grain or dates (their staple foods), often also for stubble or fodder for their livestock. Nomads relied on settled artisans for a variety of manufactured goods, some even for important parts of their tents. If political conditions favoured them, they might extract their needs as tribute or "protection money", or simply by raiding. Sometimes, nomads raised crops themselves on their own land, or they might have their land cultivated by share-cropping peasants. In many cases, a single village community included both permanently settled cultivators and semi-nomadic pastoralists who spent half the year or more away in the pastures.

Settlement appears to have been a continuous process among the nomads, for demographic reasons. They could usually boast a healthier life than settled villagers, in terms of diet and sanitation. Mobility enabled them to scatter in the face of human and animal epidemics, and they did not stay long near their refuse, advantages commonly reflected in a high rate of natural population growth.[41] This led in the long term to the settlement of the surplus population, but at times to an expansion of nomadic grazing grounds at the expense of cultivation, and to an increase in raiding, both between nomadic groups and by nomads on settled society. Settled people, however, whether tribal or non-tribal, were not slow to take advantage of the vulnerability of the nomads' property, and historically raiding by nomads on settlers was often provoked by the latter.[42]

Settlement occurred in various ways, among both rich and poor, by individuals or groups, and gradually or suddenly as a result of flock disasters.[43] Pastoralism is an unstable economy compared with settled cultivation. A farmer's main asset, land, though the harvest fail totally through bad weather, disease or depredation, remains unharmed to produce again next year. Pastoralists, on the other hand, have in their animals an asset which not only is highly susceptible to starvation, disease, exposure and theft, and can thereby be virtually annihilated in a few days or even hours, but unlike farmland (or pasture) will not automatically recover next season. A flock of sheep can be reconstituted only after years of hard and careful husbandry. A pastoral householder, in fact, needs a certain minimum number of animals in order to provide

[41] Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*, pp. 113f. [42] Cf. Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant*, p. 162.

[43] The question of how far the nomads lose or retain their tribal identity and organization upon abandoning their migratory and pastoral way of life is discussed below.

food, produce for exchange, and replacement stock. Once they fall below this number he finds it increasingly difficult to remain independent as a nomad. Unless he can find employment as a shepherd or servant, or join a raiding band, sooner or later the destitute nomad drifts into village or town as a landless labourer. The critical size of flock depends partly on how far kinsmen are willing to help each other out and whether the wealthy are willing to hire the poor as shepherds. The wealthy, however, feeling the high risks involved in pastoralism, may sell their surplus stock; they may buy jewellery or carpets, but they are more likely, in times of security, to choose the highly profitable investment of farmland; they build houses and eventually become members of a wealthy settled élite. Investment in land is not always feasible or profitable, in which case wealthy nomads may use their surpluses to recruit employees and followers among the poor. The result, given the nomad population growth, will then be an increase in raiding and in encroachments on cultivated land.[44]

To summarize the analysis so far, a number of processes affecting tribal organization has been considered, some originating in the ecology, economy and demography of pastoral nomadism, and some in cultural premises such as ideas of patriliny, patriarchy and individual property rights. For the most part, these processes occur at the level of households, camps and economic organization, and lead to certain basic similarities among the tribal groups: the ability to field large bodies of armed men, the allocation of grazing rights to patrilineal descent groups, an expanding population, and a long-term tendency to settlement or encroachment on settled society. But already variations between tribal groups with regard to camp and household size and structure have been noticed as due to the differential impact of these processes, while other variations have been related to external political factors, notably inter-tribal relations, nomad–settled relations, the influence of towns and the incidence of government control. These factors clearly affect the higher levels of tribal organization even more than the lower, and their importance was implicit in the summary of tribal political history in the first part of this chapter; it is to this area of analysis that we now return.

The main factor differentiating the political conditions and roles of individual tribal groups is the degree and kind of government interference and control. This depends partly on the ability of the government, and partly on the accessibility of the tribe concerned, in terms both of distance from cities and roads, the main organs of government, and of terrain, for example the proximity

[44] Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*, pp. 101f., 123f.

of mountain or desert refuges. Tribesmen themselves have commonly contrasted "tribal" with "government" periods in their history, and it is convenient to use these terms here too. Also, since at any one time government control extended over only some of the tribal areas, and any one tribal area came under control only part of time, the term "situation" will be used, implying a particular area at a particular time.

Thus, the frontier between nomad and settled, beween pasture and cultivation, has always fluctuated with these wider political conditions. In "tribal" situations, where governments were unable to check the encroachments of nomads, peasants might be forced to leave their farms and join them, or flee to towns for protection. In "government" situations, although the nomadic tribes were often used for military purposes, nonetheless farmers were usually encouraged to extend their cultivation into the pasture lands and thus to accelerate the natural settlement of the surplus nomad population. On the other hand, nomadism has sometimes been a response to a government seeking simply to tax and control those subjects whose settlements are accessible.[45]

The two situations give rise to contrasting types of tribal leadership, which may be termed the brigand and the chief. Following the analysis of previous pages, in "tribal" situations, where neither rich nor poor nomads settle, differences of wealth and hierarchies of status develop, compared with "government" situations, where the settlement process "drains off" both the wealthy and the destitute, and the remaining nomads are roughly similar in socio-economic status. In the former case, moreover, with raiding unchecked, there are opportunities for successful brigands to collect followers and challenge hereditary chiefs. Wherever the nomads accept the authority of government, however, there is always a difficulty of communication between them, especially when there are disputes between nomads and settled villagers, and there is a need felt by both sides for a recognized hereditary chief who has the resources both to represent his nomad followers and to deal on equal terms with settled authorities.[46]

Quite different abilities and strategies seem called for by the two types of leadership. The contrast corresponds to that made by Bailey between the "hirelings" and the "faithful", bound to their leader by transactional and moral ties respectively.[47] Actual leaders combined elements of the two. A brigand commonly began with moral authority over a core of his fellow tribesmen, though the allegiance of other followers depended on his ensuring a continuous

[45] Irons, "Nomadism".
[46] Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*, pp. 71f.
[47] Bailey, *op. cit.*, ch. 3.

flow of booty, and his authority over them was strictly limited to this transaction. Then, unless he had the abilities of a Nādir Shāh, he reached the limits of expansion, and to retain his wider leadership he had to extend his moral authority by establishing a hereditary dynasty, or being recognized by a more powerful ruler as the legitimate, official leader of his followers. A chief, on the other hand, had to prove himself more able to command than his kinsmen; then, however strong the moral and symbolic authority of the chiefship, he had to maintain his personal position not only by performing the specific functions of chiefship, but by rewarding his followers, if not with booty, at least with lavish entertainment and hospitality. Otherwise they might abandon him and support a rival, even the chief of another tribe.[48]

With respect to the problem of succession, there was in effect little difference between the two types of leaders. In both cases, the practice of polygyny and the absence of strict, recognized rules of succession ensured a proliferation of possible heirs. The only distinction was that most often the surviving members of a brigand's family were unable to display the unity and decision necessary to oppose rivals from another tribe, as occurred with the Ghilzai, Afshār and Zand rulers. A chief was more likely to be succeeded by a member of his family, but frequently it was some time before a suitable heir emerged. All the major tribal dynasties of the period – Qājār, Bakhtiyārī, Qashqā'ī – had recurrent succession problems, though they were alleviated in the Qashqā'ī case by the chiefs' avoidance of polygyny.[49]

However, it would appear to be an easier task for a chief with government support to maintain his position than for a brigand to widen his authority. A chief had duties to both government and his followers, and his position was close to that of a feudal lord. Typically, he collected tax and military levies and maintained order for the government; for his followers, he conducted external political relations of all kinds, co-ordinated the migrations, adjudicated disputes, and allocated the pastures.

Little is known about the ownership, distribution and management of grazing rights in the past. Some pastures were *khāliṣa* ("Crown" land; land not locally claimed as an individual's property), others belonged legally to settled villagers. Probably in most cases, grazing rights were vested in the tribal leaders, who allocated them – usually on a semi-permanent basis, but sometimes subject to reallotment – to patrilineal descent groups among their followers. Sometimes

[48] Barth, *loc. cit.*; Oberling, "The Tribes of Qarāca Dāġ", p. 61.

[49] Lambton, "Persian society under the Qājārs," pp. 126–7; Garthwaite, *op. cit.*; Oberling, *The Qashqā'i nomads of Fārs*; Garrod, *op. cit.*, p. 301; Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*, pp. 83f.

pastures were treated like cultivated land, in that titular owners demanded fees for their use, and indeed in at least one case (the Shāhsevan of Mughān), the sale and rent of specific pastures for cash were practised by the mid 19th century.[50] In Fārs, southern Kurdistān, the Gurgān plain, and probably elsewhere, pastures were used in successive seasons by different groups with herds of different kinds of animals.[51]

The right to allocate pastures, particularly when it was recognized by the government, was one of the main sources of a chief's continuing power over his tribal followers. In addition, apart from various customary dues, he took for himself a large proportion of the tax he collected, and he was given land grants for his services by some rulers. With this wealth, supplemented by his private land and flocks, a chief could not only display conspicuous hospitality and generosity to his followers and others, he could also support a large retinue (commonly called the *ᶜamala*) of servants and armed henchmen to coerce opponents.

The degree to which a hereditary chief can monopolize wealth and power within the tribe varies. One determinant has already been mentioned – how far wealthy nomads can invest in land, and hence whether or not rich and poor tend to settle. Even in "government" conditions, this channel of investment was not everywhere possible or profitable, less so for example among the Qashqāʾī tribes than the Bāṣirī, with the result that the former were characterized by a wide range of wealth differences and hierarchy of chiefs, sub-chiefs and headmen subordinate to the Īlkhānī, while the Bāṣirī khan had no rivals in wealth among his followers, who were all politically equal before him.[52] Also, tribal groups appear to have differed in their attitudes to authority. For example, among the Kurds hereditary chiefs were rarely challenged even in "tribal" conditions, while with government backing the *beg*s often emerged as powerful and oppressive autocrats. By contrast, the Yamūt Türkmen would recognize no hereditary chiefs even in "government" conditions, when outsiders had to be set over them to collect taxes.

The size and duration of a tribal leader's following depends on a number of other factors, such as the kinds of ties uniting them, and the political geography of their situation in terms of the proximity of cities, trade routes and frontiers.

First of all, tribal dynasties, at both national and regional levels, appear to

[50] Tapper, "Nomads and Commissars".
[51] Barth, *Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan*, p.13; *id.*, "Land-use pattern of migratory tribes of South Persia", pp. 1–11; Yate, *op. cit.*, p. 251.
[52] Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*, ch. 10.

pass through four phases of development. In the phase of expansion, a leader recruits followers from different tribes, rewarding them usually by booty from successful banditry. Those tribesmen most likely to leave home on raiding bands or military expeditions with the hope of booty, are the otherwise unemployed, usually, in "tribal" times, men from families wealthy enough to employ others to tend their pastoral property, and men who have lost their own flocks and are unwilling to herd those of another. The leader uses this support to gain control of a city and its surrounding region, including the dependent cultivators. Eventually, the expansion ceases and the establishment phase begins, whereby the leader settles in the city and takes over the administrative machinery with the aims of collecting revenue and controlling the tribes, who are now frustrated in their drive for booty. In due course the dynasty becomes used to urban life and enters the phase of decay. The peripheral tribes, now alienated from the dynasty, refuse their support, rebel in favour of other leaders, take over the outlying regions and begin to converge on the city, which is now helpless without tribal support. In the final phase, replacement, one peripheral tribe, or a coalition under a strong leader, invades the city and a new cycle begins.

Such a cycle is similar to the model developed by Ibn Khaldūn with reference to early Islamic history, largely on the basis of his observations of northwest Africa. He laid down a variety of rules defining the relations between cities and tribes, the nature and importance of the "group feeling" which characterizes the tribes and their original attachment to the leader, and the development, duration and other features of the dynasty. His model and the associated rules may, with some adjustments, be applied to Iranian history – as indeed they have been, on both the national and the regional levels.[53]

Economic exchanges linking cities and nomad tribes seem to have been considerable. Cities provided the nomads with manufactured goods and other items, and often depended on them for supplies of meat, milk products, wool and charcoal.[54] Politically, too, the rise of the important tribal confederations of the 18th and 19th centuries was closely related to the proximity of both cities and trade routes. As already mentioned, this factor affected the ease with which government could control the tribes, but it also affected the ease with which, in "tribal" times, a tribal leader could acquire a source of wealth and security and a

[53] Ibn Khaldûn, *The Muqaddima*, tr. F. Rosenthal (New York, 1958); Issawi, *op. cit.*, pp. 4–5; B. Spooner, "Politics, Kinship, and Ecology in Southeast Persia", pp. 139–52; Tapper, "Introduction" to *The Conflict of Tribe and State*, pp. 61f. Cf. X. de Planhol, *Les fondements géographiques de l'histoire de l'islam*, pp. 59–60; Fraser, *op. cit.* II, pp. 303–4.

[54] G.N. Curzon, *Persia and the Persian Question* II, pp. 281, 289; B. Nikitine, *Les Kurdes*, p. 58; Tapper, "Nomads and Commissars".

base for further expansion. The remoter tribes were not only comparatively free from interference by government, it was also more difficult for a leader to persuade them to leave home and join him in an expedition to capture a distant city. Ambitious leaders, local or national, needed both urban bases and tribal support, and no ruler could rely on just one of these elements.[55] In fact, each of the four tribal ruling dynasties after the Safavids had a different metropolis, though each conqueror had first to capture that of his predecessor. Rulers then had to make the choice between installing tribal chiefs as official governors of their local towns, and thereby recognizing their autonomy, or sending their own state officials as governors with the difficult task of conciliating and controlling the local tribes.

Of the four capitals of the period, Iṣfahān, Shīrāz and Tehran were important in the rise of tribal dynasties other than the rulers. The Bakhtiyārī grew in influence in Safavid times as the tribal group closest to the capital, Iṣfahān, occupying at the same time comparatively inaccessible mountain territory. The Qājār capital, too, was close enough for the Bakhtiyārī to occupy it in 1909. Meanwhile, the rise of the Qashqāʾī was probably connected with the location of the Zand capital at Shīrāz.[56] In the 19th century, the Bakhtiyārī, Qashqāʾī and Khamsa chiefs gained power from their ability to control the increasingly important trade crossing their lands. Later, these groups acquired further influence from their relations with the British. Mashhad, the Afshār capital from about 1740 until 1796, was the most important trading centre in eastern Iran – apart from Herat, which was later lost to the Afghans – and the early Qājārs made great efforts to retain control there. The last tribal confederation to establish a base there was that led in revolt by Isḥāq Khān Qarāʾī in the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh.

Hambly estimates that there were seven other cities of over 20,000 people in early Qājār times.[57] Three of these, Yazd, Kāshān and Qazvīn, were important internal trading and manufacturing centres, but being close to Tehran and far from major tribal areas, and moreover situated in terrain not easily capable of supporting large tribal armies, were not attractive as bases for expansion by tribal leaders. Tabrīz, on the other hand, was the constant object of competition between Afghan, Afshār, Dunbulī and Shaqāqī leaders during the "tribal" years of the 18th century, before becoming strongly defended as the Qājārs' most important provincial capital; then in 1908–9 it was held by the Nationalists

[55] Cf. Perry, *Karim Khan Zand*, pp. 223f.

[56] Cf. Oberling, *The Qashqāʾi nomads of Fārs*, pp. 39–44.

[57] G. Hambly, "An introduction to the Economic Organization of early Qājār Iran", pp. 72f.

against the pro-Qājār tribal confederation of Raḥīm Khān Qaradāghī. Two other major cities were frontier trade emporia, and thus unsuitable as bases for the control of the rest of Iran, but were themselves dominated by tribal groups during the period: Khūy by the Dunbulī, Kirmānshāh by the Kurds. Hamadān, finally, another trade and manufacturing centre, was comparatively accessible to Tehran, and dominated by the Qarāgūzlū chiefs, who remained loyal to the Qājārs.

Many of the smaller cities were left in the control of one of the local tribes for all or part of the period. Although no other confederacies developed centralized leadership on the same scale as the Bakhtiyārī and Qashqāʾī, some, such as the Shāhsevan, Türkmen and Balūch, became of as much concern to the Qājār government as were the former groups, mainly because of their widespread raiding activities and disruption of the main trading routes. Thus, the Shāhsevan, whose chiefs had controlled the small city of Ardabīl until 1808, were prominent in the later Qājār period for their pillaging in Russian Mughān and on the caravan trade from Tabrīz to Julfa, the Caspian and Tehran, which caused the Russians to put pressure on the Iranian government. In the southeast, the Balūch raided widely, while Türkmen forays, particularly on the Tehran–Mashhad road, made both cultivation and trade highly perilous in northeastern Iran throughout the period, as has been mentioned above.

Except in the Türkmen and Balūch cases, there was always a necessary relation between the important tribes and the cities. An ambitious tribal leader's first aim was the capture of a city; a hereditary chief, on the other hand, would find himself in a city either as hostage or on official business, and he too inevitably made a base there. When either type of leader came to town, he brought some of his immediate followers, and they would settle as his servants or henchmen.[58] The paradox often developed, as Ibn Khaldūn observed, that a tribal dynasty needed a settled base, but once established there it was corrupted by the luxuries of urban life, and sooner or later drew away from most of its original tribal support.

Ibn Khaldūn's "group feeling" is a moral sentiment, arising from common descent and ethnic and cultural similarity. Such a sentiment would seem to have played a minor part in the rise of the ruling dynasties of 18th- and 19th-century Iran, which all came to power with the support of coalitions of disparate ethnic elements, held together for the most part by non-tribal, transactional bonds such as military discipline and a desire for plunder. However, the religious fellowship

[58] Cf. Morier, "Some Account of the Íliyáts", p. 236.

which united the Qizilbāsh tribes under the Safavids had its legacy under their successors. Both Nādir Afshār and Karīm Khān Zand used Safavid puppet Shahs to help legitimate their authority, while the Qājārs, apart from reviving Safavid notions of absolute sovereignty, depended in the first place on a tribal cohesion akin to the "group feeling" of Ibn Khaldūn. Nonetheless, the tribal forces which brought the Ghilzai, Afshār, Zand and Qājār rulers to power were heterogeneous and all except the Zands included substantial Sunnī elements.

As for the duration of the ruling dynasties, the quick demise of the Ghilzais and Afshārs was due in part to the behaviour of Ashraf and Nādir, but in both cases, as in that of the potentially better founded Zands, there was a fatal lack of moral commitment in their tribal support.[59] The Safavid and Qājār dynasties, on the other hand, owed much of their longevity to the "group feeling" established in their original rise to power, though both were in the end decisively affected by quite external factors. Thus, the long peace on the Safavid frontiers was one of the factors which allowed that dynasty to decay to the extent that it quickly fell when finally attacked, while the Qājār dynasty was both confined and supported by the rivalry of Britain and Russia, which both accelerated its decay and delayed its end.

On a local level, populations are more likely to be united by moral sentiments, especially within regions such as Kurdistān, Luristān, Balūchistān and Āẕarbāījān, which are of comparative ethnic homogeneity. But this does not mean the people of such regions are necessarily all tribally organized, let alone likely to form large tribal confederations. Actually, the history of tribal transportations in Iran meant that many areas such as Fārs, Kirmān, Khurāsān, and the region between Hamadān, Tehran, and Māzandarān, were quite mixed ethnically, and anyway, the major confederations, some of which came from these regions, were of composite origins. Nonetheless, tribal groups in a locality are capable of developing "group feeling" even when they are of different origins and speak different languages. When such groups occupy neighbouring territories and give their allegiance to a common chiefly dynasty, although this political union may have begun fortuitously as a result of a forced migration, or with quite material objectives, it may well, after a few generations, develop cultural symbols of common identity, and disparate origins may then be discounted as politically irrelevant. For example, in Fārs, where the component tribes of the Khamsa and Qashqāʾī confederations have lived for some centuries, the former are known as "ʿArab", and the latter as "Turk", even though they are

[59] cf. Lambton "Tribal resurgence", p. 109.

of highly varied languages and origins.[60] Similarly, the Shāhsevan tribes of Mughān, which were partly Kurds indigenous to the area and partly Turks and others introduced before 1700, had by the mid 18th century achieved political unity and by the 19th century were regarded as ethnically one. By contrast the various tribal groups in Khurāsān and the vicinity of Tehran, transplanted there more recently by Nādir Shāh or the early Qājārs, have remained for the most part distinct politically and ethnically.

Other processes affect inter-tribal politics. In the absence of effective superior authority, relations between autonomous political units within a region take on a familiar chequer-board character: neighbours maintain relations of hostility on their boundaries, but ally themselves with their neighbours, forming a larger pattern of two coalitions or blocs throughout or even beyond the region. Such chequer-board and bloc patterns have been recorded at several levels: in Fārs, where recently the Khamsa opposed the Qashqā'ī but allied with the Mamasanī, who opposed the Boir Aḥmad who were consequently allied with the Qashqā'ī; among the Kūhgīlū tribes in the early years of this century; among the Shāhsevan tribes of Mishkīn and Ardabīl around 1920; in the case of the Sherep and Choni blocs of the Yamūt Türkmen in Gurgān; and among the Khanates and tribes of Transcaucasia and Āẕarbāījān during the 18th century.[61]

Where government or other supra-tribal leadership was absent for a long period, and particularly among Sunnī tribes near the frontiers, groups of Sayyids or other religious authorities living on the borders between hostile neighbours might be employed to mediate between them.[62]

The factional opposition of tribes in a region mainly involved the leaders of the political units, and subordinate leaders frequently upset a balanced relation by defecting, with their followers, to the other side. Sometimes the alignments extended into urban society, as with the Qashqā'ī and Khamsa leaders in Shīrāz, or the Shāhsevan in Ardabīl in the early 20th century when the rival Qojabeglū and Polatlū tribes supported the local factions of the Ni'matī and Ḥaidarī respectively.[63] Out of this factional tendency arose the notorious reluctance of tribal groups to combine on a regional, let alone a national basis; but tribal

[60] Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*, p. 131.

[61] Barth, *Nomads of South Persia*, p. 130; G. Demorgny, pp. 134–5; J. Ranking, *Report on the Kuhgalu tribes*; Tapper, *The Shahsavan of Āẕarbaijan*, pp. 502, 664f.; Irons, "Nomadism as a political adaptation", p. 644; cf. Barth, *Political Leadership among Swat Pathans*.

[62] Irons, "Nomadism as a political adaptation", pp. 645f.; Garrod, "The nomadic tribes of Persia today," p. 37; B. Spooner, "Religion and Society today: an anthropological perspective", p. 178f. Cf. Barth, *Swat Pathans*; E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica* (Oxford, 1949); E. Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*.

[63] B. Safarī, *Ardabīl dar guẕargāh-i tārīkh* I, pp. 199–200.

combinations were still the largest and most effective organized political groups. When a strong leader did seek to control a whole region, he usually gained support first from one bloc alone, and formed it into a confederation to overcome the other; such tactics were employed both by the main conquerors of the period, and by established rulers in their tribal policies.

It remains to be considered how far, in 18th- and 19th-century Iran, the nomads lost their tribal identity and organization upon settlement. The available information is too sparse to permit detailed discussion, but some general trends can be suggested. Settlement meant the abandonment of pastoralism and mobile tent-camps for cultivation and fixed dwellings; it clearly also involved a loss of political mobility and probably of independence. The degree to which settlers became detribalized depended to a great extent on whether they settled in an area where they could identify with the dominant ethnic group. For example, when Kurds settled in the mountains where they were the majority element, they maintained their identity and forms of tribal organization; but where they settled in the plains among communities of Turkic peoples, they were quickly Turkicized. The tribes settled near Tehran under the Qājārs soon became detribalized, while the Qājārs themselves maintained the forms of their tribal organization until the 20th century. The settled ʿArabs of the Gulf Coast and Khūzistān retained their identity, yet the ʿArabs of the Khamsa, even when remaining nomads, became assimilated with the Persian-speaking majority.[64]

Other factors were also important: whether the nomads settled as individuals or in kinship-based communities, and whether propertyless or as owners of the land. Where nomads settled as landless individuals in peasant villages, they very quickly lost their tribal identity. On the other hand, where kin-groups of nomads settled to cultivate their own land or the land of their chief, they might well retain their tribal identity for a long time, as did several Shāhsevan groups which settled in the vicinity of Ardabīl. Yet the loss of their physical and political mobility and the fluidity of their nomadic groups, and the acquisition of an attachment to plots of land and greater security of home and property, gave their social organization characteristic peasant forms: notably a tendency to factionalism within the community, usually arising from bitter quarrels between kinsmen and neighbours over land. Not surprisingly, settled nomads lose their martial qualities and become even less willing to leave home for a campaign.[65]

Chiefs and other wealthy nomads who settle as landowners may continue to be known as tribal leaders, but their relation with tenants and other cultivating

[64] Cf. Barth, *Southern Kurdistan*, pp. 131f., and see above; Fortescue, pp. 312f.; Aubin, p. 138; Demorgny, pp. 104–5. [65] Cf. Tapper, *The Shahsavan of Azarbaijan*, pp. 601f.

dependants, even when of tribal origins, cannot be termed "tribal" leadership, as it is usually indistinguishable from non-tribal landlord-peasant relations. Many settled tribal leaders maintained mobile retinues of armed henchmen, but so did all local khans, tribal or non-tribal, in many areas.[66]

At any one time, substantial parts of many tribal groups were settled or semi-settled. Considering the demographic process of constant flow of population from nomadic camps to villages and towns, these settled tribesmen can be seen as in a state of transition, sooner or later to end in detribalization. The basis of tribally organized society in Iran was pastoral nomadism. The politically important tribal groups in the period were almost all nomadic or semi-nomadic, and their importance must be related to their potential, when united by a strong leader, for raising considerable bodies of cavalry. Although these armies, when mobilized for campaigns away from tribal territory, rarely exceeded a few thousand men, they were still the best organized and most formidable in the country at the time. On the other hand, the forces that settled tribal leaders could muster were numbered only in hundreds and were usually active only locally. However, those tribal elements active as a "problem" in national political affairs were by no means drawn exclusively from the nomads. The core of the military forces wielded by the larger confederations comprised first, warriors from the leading families, who tended to form part of both settled and nomadic society at once, and secondly, their armed retinues, recruited from the destitute, both nomad and peasant.

The political organization of tribal groups in Iran during the 18th and 19th centuries has been analysed here as resulting partly from the bases of group solidarity, partly from the varying influence of government and wider political relations, and partly from the nature of ongoing relations with urban and settled society. The possibility of some general evolutionary trend in tribal organization has not been considered, but there is in fact little evidence for this.[67] Apart from the general process of settlement of the surplus population, major changes in nomadic society that did occur were largely due not only to the influence of government but ultimately to that of the Great Powers, Russia in the north and Britain in the south. At the same time, the tribal situation at the end of the Qājār period in many ways resembled that at the end of the Safavids, two centuries earlier, and to a great extent coincided with that predictable from Ibn Khaldūn's model. The tribal leaders were urbanized; the tribal groups located near the cities were settled and becoming detribalized; while in the mountains and on the

[66] Fortescue, pp. 312–13; cf. Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant*, p. 289; also Barth, *Southern Kurdistan*, chapter 7. [67] See Appendix below.

frontiers there was a resurgence of martial nomadic tribalism. The significant difference between the early 20th century and the early 18th century, in this light, is that – again largely due to external influence – the dynasty that replaced the Qājārs was of a totally new character to those that succeeded the Safavids.

APPENDIX

A number of writers have put forward ideas on the evolution of the tribal system in Iran during this period. For example, de Planhol, seeing the period from the 18th century to the present as the heydey of the large composite confederations of nomadic tribes such as the Qashqā᾽ī, Bakhtiyārī and Khamsa, argues that they emerged in conditions of maximum grazing density of the pastures, extended migrations, and close contacts with non-tribal villagers, and that they represented the final evolutionary stage before settlement.[68] However, this view does not account for the facts that numerous tribal groups which lived in such conditions did not form confederations, that others did not live in such conditions and yet became settled, and that geographical location, national and international politics were major factors in the rise of the three confederations mentioned. Besides, several Qizilbāsh tribes under the earlier Safavids had been composite confederations of the same order as these,[69] though by 1700, when the new groups were emerging, the Qizilbāsh had mostly been broken up, settled or widely scattered.

Another writer, Vilchevskiy, discussing the northern Kurds, held that by 1800, the chiefs having become vassals of the Ottoman or Iranian rulers, a feudal system of relations developed among the nomads, accompanied by a breakdown of the old tribal system of kinship solidarity and communal organization. Under the feudal system the pastoral economy collapsed, revolts broke out, and the current organization of *oba* communities developed, each led by a capitalist *oba-bāshī*.[70] The unilinear evolution from tribal to feudal to capitalist stages implied in this argument seems too rigid, and the timing suggested is certainly premature for other Kurdish areas. In southern ᶜIrāqī Kurdistān, for example, Barth argues that there are two contrasting systems, the tribal (democratic and lineage-based) and the feudal (hierarchical and land-based), which tend to alternate over time, though in the present century the trend away from tribalism has been irreversibly established.[71]

A further Soviet writer, Rostopchin, basing his argument on the account of the Tsarist officer Tigranov, maintained that the Shāhsevan tribal confederation, formed with military purposes by Shāh ᶜAbbās I, flourished in the 17th century but by the 18th had broken into its constituent parts. One of these, the Shāhsevan of Ardabīl, developed a feudal system of relations based on the chiefs' control of pastures. The system was in the last stages of disintegration when the Russians became familiar with it in the 19th century.

[68] De Planhol, pp. 229–31.

[69] Cf. I.P. Petrushevskiy, p. 95.

[70] O. Vilchevskiy, "Ekonomika Kurdskoy". See also his "Mukrinskie Kurdy", in *Peredneaziatskiy Etnograficheskiy Sbornik* 1, Akad. Nauk S.S.R. (Moscow, 1958), pp. 180–222; also Nikitine, *Les Kurdes*, pp. 140f.

[71] Barth, *Southern Kurdistan*, pp. 131f.; see also Rudolph, *op. cit.*

Actually, there is no evidence for the formation of a Shāhsevan tribal confederation before the 18th century; the Ardabīl group did not exist as a political entity until then, and might have reached its peak in the 19th century had it not been for the advent and policies of the Russians in Shāhsevan territory, crucial factors in the tribes' development which Rostopchin quite overlooked.[72]

[72] F.B. Rostopchin, "Zametki o Shakhsevenakh"; L.F. Tigranov, *Iz obshchestvenno-ekonomicheskikh otnosheniy v Persii*, pp. 104f. Cf. Tapper, "Shāhsevan in Ṣafavid Persia."

CHAPTER 15

THE TRADITIONAL IRANIAN CITY IN THE QĀJĀR PERIOD

The heading for this chapter is deliberately imprecise. It refers to urban life in the period immediately preceding that when the many changes occurred which thrust Iran into the 20th century: large-scale importation of European goods; the development of an export market for some indigenous commodities; the increasing effect upon the economy of foreign banks and currencies; and, at a humbler level, the appearance of the kerosene lamp and cooking-stove, the sewing-machine and, later, the typewriter, the bicycle and radio. There are no dates to mark the passing of the traditional Iranian city, but what this chapter endeavours to present is a portrait, along the lines of Peter Laslett's enquiry into the social conditions of pre-industrial England, of the world that the Iranians lost in that transition.[1] Such an undertaking is fraught with problems of description, analysis and interpretation. The documentation which served as the starting-point for the researches into medieval and early modern France of the *Annales* School, so influential in the development of the "new" social history, is almost wholly lacking for 19th century Iran. Statistical data is scarce. Surviving records, personal memoirs and correspondence from Qājār times, while attracting increased attention from historians, have survived haphazardly. The researcher remains dangerously dependent upon the subjective accounts of European diplomats, travellers and missionaries. Thus the chapter which follows, focusing mainly upon the reigns of Āghā Muḥammad Khān, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh and, to a lesser extent, Muḥammad Shāh, is based upon an amorphous body of random facts and personal observations.

How many Iranians were there in the world which they have lost? The size of the population of early Qājār Iran cannot be known with any degree of certainty. In the first quarter of the 19th century Sir John Malcolm proposed the round figure of six millions. The French diplomat and orientalist, Pierre-Amédée Jaubert, opted for just over six and a half millions. A British diplomatic report of 1868 (by R.F. Thomson) suggested that the population was between four and five million. Lord Curzon, in 1891, reckoned nine million and Colonel A.I.

[1] Peter Laslett, *The World We Have Lost. England Before The Industrial Age* (London, 1965), 3rd edn., 1983.

Medvedev, in 1909, ten million.[2] What can be stated with certainty is that the way of life of the majority of Iranians in the early Qājār period was rooted in sedentary agriculture or pastoral nomadism. Only a small proportion lived in anything approaching a truly urban environment. Nevertheless, cities and towns had an importance which had nothing to do with the sum total of their inhabitants. As religious and administrative centres, as focal points for the exchange of goods and services, and as the repositories of literacy, culture and material comforts they continued to nourish traditional civilization.

The most prominent urban centres were, with few exceptions, those which enjoyed a continuous history going back to at least the beginning of the Islamic era: Iṣfahān (the largest city in Iran at the beginning of the 19th century), Shīrāz, Mashhad, Tabrīz, Kāshān, Yazd, Kirmān, Hamadān and Kirmānshāh. Only Tehran, selected by Āghā Muḥammad Khān for his capital, was a relatively recent foundation where villages had been. After these major centres came those with a more restricted regional importance, Shūshtar, Dizfūl, Sanandaj, Marāgha, Sārī and Astarābād, and the special category of ports and entrepôts for foreign trade, Enzeli (Anzalī), Bushire, Bandar ʿAbbās, Rasht and Khūy. There were also market-towns, often little more than overgrown villages, which owed their existence to being located at a point where roads or tracks converged, or to being a natural outlet for local agricultural produce. Sometimes, such modest settlements served the needs of a quite extensive (and typically, transmontane) hinterland.[3] In general, most urban centres were situated at great distances from each other, most villages were similarly isolated from their neighbours, and the entire countryside was characterized by a sparsity of population, due to the prevailing aridity, except in such atypical areas as Āẕarbāījān and Māzandarān. In much of Khurāsān the raids of Türkmens and Balūchīs had, over many decades, contributed to the depopulation of once-flourishing districts.

Contemporary European estimates of the size of early 19th-century towns and cities were mostly guesswork, based upon a combination of personal observation and information provided by local Iranians. The latter may have been less well-informed than their interrogators assumed, and they may have

[2] Malcolm, *History* II, pp. 518–19; Jaubert, *Voyage*, p. 268; Issawi, *Economic History*, pp. 28, 33.

[3] For the concept of transmontane linkages, see Spooner, "Arghiyān", in which he writes: "It is interesting and I suggest typical generally of the ecology of Persia that these four natural divisions [i.e., of Juvain, Isfarāyin, Jājarm and the part of Arghiyān towards Bastām] look not across the plain at each other, but, at least more immediately, over to the other side of the mountains under which they shelter and to which they owe their meagre water supply. Juvain looks to Sabzavār, Isfarāyin to Bujnurd, Jājarm to Bujnurd and Gumbad-i Qābūs. Centres of plains on the plateau are often saline, waterless and sometimes treacherous; mountain ranges are invariably dissected by river courses which are passable for most of the year" (pp. 99–100).

had their own reasons for exaggerating or minimizing the figures. A local revenue official, for example, might be inclined to underestimate the size of the population upon which the revenue-assessment was based. Moreover, foreigners who asked many questions may have provoked suspicion, and a consequent desire to mislead them. In the absence of any reliable statistics, however, these estimates possess an intrinsic interest, and even a qualified authenticity. The most complete set of figures for the urban population in the early part of the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh is that assembled by John Macdonald Kinneir prior to 1813. In the following paragraphs the discussion is based on his estimates.[4]

In the first part of the 19th century Iṣfahān was the most populated city in the kingdom. Malcolm believed that what had been a population of some 100,000 at the close of the 18th century had doubled to nearly 200,000 by 1815 as a result of improved administration and increased security, a view shared by Kinneir. Herat, viewed by the Qājārs as part of Iran, although in actuality occupied by the Durrānī Afghans, came second with approximately 100,000.[5] Its size goes far to explaining the preoccupation of successive Shahs with its restoration to Iran. After Iṣfahān and Herat came ten cities of which the population of each was reckoned to exceed 20,000. Among the largest of these may have been Yazd, which Kinneir thought "large and populous ... Yezd is the grand mart between *Hindostan*, *Bokhara*, and *Persia*, and is, consequently, a place of considerable trade. The *bazar* is well supplied, and the city contains twenty thousand houses".[6] The last figure may be an exaggeration but reflects contemporary opinion that Yazd was a large, flourishing commercial centre. Tehran, the capital, was believed to have a population which reached 60,000 in the winter months, although when the Shah, with his troops, made his annual progress into the provinces in late spring or passed the summer encamped at Sulṭānīya, and those who could quit the heat of the city for the cool of the villages around Shamiran, the population was said to fall to 10,000. But the city grew in population year by year. As one observer put it,

> ... since the city has become so populous, houses are found more profitable than trees or flowers; and in few parts of the empire do so many handsome and commodious buildings

[4] Kinneir, *Geographical Memoir*. An officer in the East India Company's Madras Native Infantry, Kinneir was attached to the 1808–9 mission of Sir John Malcolm (his cousin) to the court of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, and thereafter travelled extensively in Iran and in the eastern *vilayats* of the Ottoman Empire. He was the Company's Minister in Tehran between 1824 and his death in Tabrīz in 1830. The population figures quoted in this chapter are taken from the *Memoir*, which is fully indexed.

[5] For Herat, see Kinneir, *op. cit.*, p. 182, and Elphinstone, *An Account of the Kingdom of Caubul* II, p. 216. For Iṣfahān, see Kinneir, *op. cit.*, p. 111; Malcolm, *History of Persia* II, pp. 519–20; and Ouseley, III, p. 24.

[6] Kinneir, *op. cit.*, p. 133.

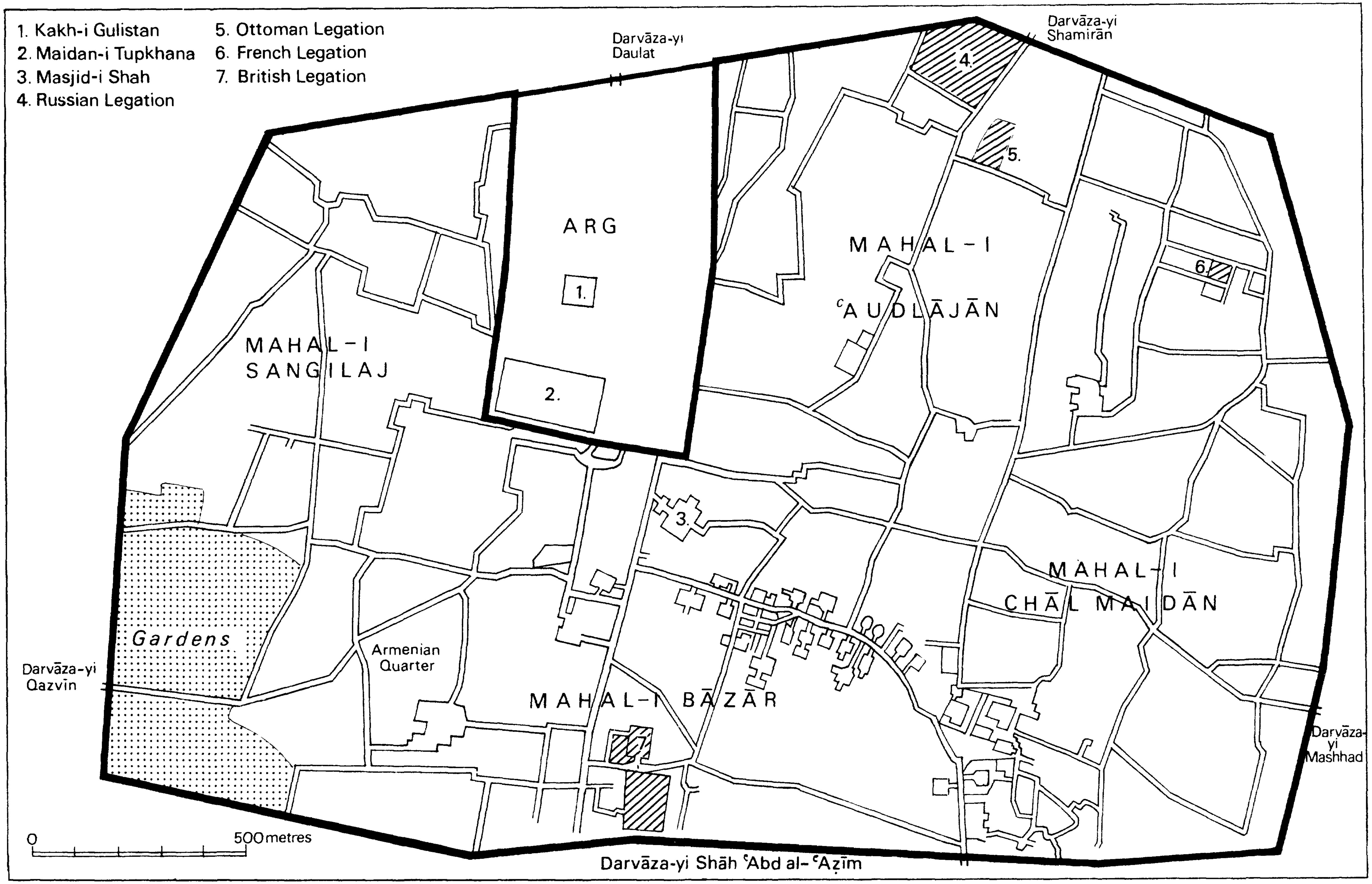


Fig. 1 Tehran in 1858.

appear on the same space of ground. Here every man of rank and fortune, all who aspire to the sovereign's notice, endeavour to procure a dwelling; the rent therefore, and the price of land, elsewhere comparatively trifling, have risen here so considerably, that, as I understood, Tehran in these articles of expense, nearly equalled any European metropolis.[7]

Mashhad, Kāshān and Kirmānshāh were probably all of a similar size. Mashhad was said to contain a population of 50,000. Kinneir omitted a figure for Kāshān but thought it "one of the most flourishing cities in Persia". Kirmānshāh was described as possessing 12,000 houses: Kinneir seems to have reckoned on four persons to one house.[8] Hamadān and Shīrāz were said to have a population of 40,000 each. The population of Shīrāz had declined following its demotion from being the Zand capital and its terrible chastisement by Āghā Muḥammad Khān, but its fortunes began to recover with the appointment of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's son, Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā, as *beglerbegī* of Fārs in 1797. Contemporary estimates of its size varied greatly.[9] The same was true of Tabrīz, which Kinneir put at 30,000, describing it as "one of the most wretched cities I have seen in Persia", despite the fact that it was the usual residence of the heir-apparent (*valī-ʿahd*), ʿAbbās Mīrzā. But Kinneir was not alone in his opinion: Sir William Ouseley also thought that the greater part of the city was in ruins, despite evidence of bustle and enterprise in the bazaar. Qazvīn, transmontane depot for the Caspian trade, was reckoned to have a population of 25,000, and the same size was attributed to Khūy, the entrepôt through which passed the commerce with eastern Anatolia and the Black Sea ports.[10]

After these twelve major urban centres (if Herat be included among them), there were at least fourteen more with populations between approximately ten and twenty thousand. Ṭabas, Turshīz and Kirmān (the last recovering slowly from Āghā Muḥammad Khān's sack of 1794) were said to contain 20,000 each.

[7] Ouseley, *op. cit.* III, p. 121. See also Kinneir *op. cit.*, p. 119, and Ouseley, *op. cit.* III, pp. 119–20.

[8] Kinneir, *op. cit.*, p. 132. In the late 18th century, Kirmānshāh was described as "a large village" (Buckingham, *Travels* I, pp. 175–6). In 1796 it appeared to have no more than eight or nine thousand inhabitants (Olivier, *Voyages* III, p. 23). A visitor in 1836 reckoned a population of thirty-five thousand, but by this time Kirmānshāh had experienced, first, a quarter of a century of expansion, and then, a decade of decay. See Southgate, *Narrative* II, p. 137.

[9] Against Kinneir's figure of 40,000, others estimated the population of Shīrāz to be considerably less. Ouseley believed it to be nearer 20,000 than 30,000 (*Travels* I, p. 26). James Morier went to some effort to obtain an accurate figure on the basis of bread consumption patterns, as well as information provided by local notables. He concluded that the population was between eighteen and nineteen thousand. See Morier, *Second Journey*, p. 111.

[10] For Khūy, see Kinneir, *op. cit.*, p. 154, and Ouseley, *op. cit.*, III, p. 377. Morier, however, believed Khūy to have a population of fifty thousand, of which the majority were Armenians. See Morier, *op. cit.*, p. 299.

Turbat-i Ḥaidarī, ruled during the early part of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's reign by a virtually independent adventurer, ʿĪsā Khān, had 18,000. Nīshāpūr, Marāgha and Shūshtar were reckoned to have 15,000 inhabitants, with Dizfūl somewhat less. Close to these was Erivan, with a population estimated at between 13,000 and 14,000. It had suffered from the passage of Āghā Muḥammad Khān's troops in 1795, felt at first hand the effects of the wars of 1804–13 and 1826–8, was occupied by the Russians in 1827 and formally transferred to Russia by treaty in the following year.[11] Urmīya, Burūjird and Lār had populations of around 12,000; Zanjān, between 10,000 and 12,000; and Bihbahān, 10,000. There were also several cities and towns for which Kinneir omitted figures altogether. These included Ardabīl, Astarābād, Qum, Rasht, Sabzavār and Sārī. Ouseley reckoned that Qum contained 1,700 to 2,000 families, but seems to have made no allowance for students, pilgrims and mendicants.[12] Rasht was a major commercial centre, and Fraser, who visited it in 1822, judged its population to be between 60,000 and 80,000 (which seems excessive), while he put Sārī at between 30,000 and 40,000.[13]

The remaining towns were extremely small. Bushire, despite its importance in the Gulf trade, was said to have no more than eight to nine thousand inhabitants, and the other ports were substantially smaller. Most, however, had potential for growth, and so had many small marketing-centres whose location pointed to future expansion, ranging from Kāzarūn, with three to five thousand, to Ahvāz, containing only six or seven hundred.

Kinneir's figures constitute a serious attempt to collate such information as was available during the first ten or twelve years of the 19th century. It is interesting to compare these with estimates made half a century later by two other British officials, K.E. Abbott between 1847 and 1866,[14] and R.F. Thomson in 1868.[15]

When considering the relative importance of different cities in the early Qājār period, it is interesting to note those which possessed sufficient commercial importance to serve as mints. In the tabulated list which follows, the mint-towns of Āghā Muḥammad Khān and Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh are placed against those of the last Safavid ruler, Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain, and of Nādir Shāh. That a few cities continued as mints throughout a century and a half of great instability is undoubtedly significant, but the fact that so many cities and towns served as

[11] Ouseley, III, p. 440. For Erivan in its last years under Iranian rule, see Bournoutian, *Eastern Armenia*. [12] *Ouseley, op. cit.*, III, p. 104.

[13] Fraser, *Caspian Sea*, pp. 151 and 46.

[14] These figures are taken from Amanat (ed.), *Cities and Trade*.

[15] See Issawi, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

Table 1. *Comparative population estimates for 19th-century Iranian cities*

	Kinneir	*Abbott*	*Thomson*
Iṣfahān	200,000	100,000	60,000
Yazd	20,000 houses	35,000–40,000	40,000
Tehran	60,000		85,000
Mashhad	50,000	—	70,000
Kirmānshāh	12,000 houses	25,000	30,000
Kāshān	—	30,000	10,000
Hamadān	40,000	30,000	30,000
Shīrāz	40,000	35,000–40,000	25,000
Tabrīz	30,000	150,000	110,000
Qazvīn	25,000		25,000
Khūy	25,000	25,000–30,000	20,000
Kirmān	20,000	25,000	30,000
Ṭabas	20,000	-	
Turshīz	20,000		10,000
Turbat-i Ḥaidarī	18,000	—	-
Nīshāpūr	15,000	—	8,000
Marāgha	15,000	20,000	15,000
Shūshtar	15,000		25,000
Dizfūl	15,000 (below)	—	15,000
Urmīya	12,000	30,000	30,000
Burūjird	12,000	—	10,000
Lār	12,000	2,000–3,000 families	-
Zanjān	10,000–12,000	—	20,000
Bihbahān	10,000	—	—
Sanandaj	8,000	—	20,000
Bushire	8,000–9,000	—	18,000
Kāzarūn	3,000–5,000	1,500–2,000 families	
Ahvāz	600–700	—	
No figures given by Kinneir			
Ardabīl	—	15,000	10,000
Astarābād	—	1,000 families	18,000
Qum	—	- -	12,000
Rasht	—	—	18,000
Sabzavār	—	—	12,000
Sārī	—	—	15,000

mints during the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh points to increased local demand for coin, which in turn strengthens the argument of those who maintain that early 19th-century Iran underwent an extensive commercial, and with it, an extensive urban revival.[16]

[16] This table is based upon the lists of mint-towns given in Rabino di Borgomale, *Coins, Medals and Seals*, pp. 41, 52, 62 and 65. An asterisk indicates a mint-town where only silver coins were struck. In all other towns, both gold and silver coins were minted. The list excludes mint-towns which were no longer within the frontiers of Iran at the time of the death of Fatḥ ʿAli Shāh in 1834.

Table 2. *Mint towns of the Safavid and early Qājār periods*

Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain	Nādir Shāh	Āghā Muḥammad Khān	Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh
—		—	Ardabīl
—	—	Astarābād	Astarābād
	—	—	Burūjird
	—	—	Fūman
—	—	—	Hamadān
Iṣfahān	Iṣfahān	Iṣfahān	Iṣfahān
*Kashān	—	Kāshān	Kāshān
	*Khūy	Khūy	Khūy
—	*Kirmān	Kirmān	Kirmān
	—	*Kirmānshāh	Kirmānshāh
	—	*Lāhijān	Lāhījān
	*Marāgha	*Marāgha	*Marāgha
Mashhad	Mashhad	—	Mashhad
—	*Māzandarān	Māzandarān	Māzandarān
Qazvīn	*Qazvīn	Qazvīn	Qazvīn
—	—	*Qum	Qum
*Rasht	—	Rasht	Rasht
—	—	*Simnān	*Simnān
*Shīrāz	Shīrāz	Shīrāz	Shīrāz
	—	—	Ṭabaristān
Tabrīz	Tabrīz	Tabrīz	Tabrīz
	—	Tehran	Tehran
—	—	*Urmīya	*Urmīya
*Yazd	—	Yazd	Yazd
—	—	—	Zanjān

In general, city life seems to have benefited from the relative tranquillity which characterized the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh and was in such marked contrast to the anarchy that had prevailed throughout much of the 18th century. Tehran, as the capital of the new dynasty, was the most conspicuous example of urban growth, but several provincial centres gained from being the residence of the beglerbegī (or provincial governor), especially when the latter was one of the Shah's sons. The Qājārs reverted to the Saljūq and Safavid practice of appointing the ruler's brothers, sons, or grandsons to provincial governorships. When the appointee was a minor, an experienced *vazīr* was attached to his court, with duties similar to those of the Saljūq *atābeg*s. The practice of distributing royal princes throughout the provinces contributed towards the social and economic revival of provincial capitals, since each prince maintained his own court, a miniature version of the Tehran court, and this stimulated an increased local demand for essential and luxury commodities, and for services of many kinds. On the other hand, the proliferation of petty courts (in effect, a means of easing the fiscal burden of maintaining Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's vast progeny on the central

treasury) meant that the provinces had to bear the expense of the prince's household and entourage, while being exposed to the extortion and tyrannical behaviour which frequently characterized a prince's attendants, servants and soldiers. Moreover, at a local level, each prince followed his father's example in relieving himself of the maintenance of his own offspring by a process of further delegation of authority. Thus, in the early 1820s, the beglerbegī of Māzandarān, Muḥammad Qulī Mīrzā, had appointed his eldest son as deputy-governor of Bārfurūsh; another, of Astarābād and Ashraf; a third, of Āmul; and a fourth, of Tunakābun. "This practice", wrote a contemporary British observer, "generally proves a severe aggravation to the burdens of the respective governments; for they have to supply the expence [*sic*] of keeping up a petty court and its rapacious officers, while they are relieved of little, if any, of the regular taxes due to the crown."[17]

One positive aspect of the system deserves some emphasis. While the Qājārs were not patrons or builders on the scale of the Timurids or the Safavids, they were responsible for the construction of a substantial number of public structures, the building of which involved the employment of considerable numbers of both skilled craftsmen and unskilled labourers, as well as stimulating a market for bricks, wood, stonework, marble, decorative tiles, and other materials (see below, Ch. 24). Āghā Muḥammad Khān had palaces erected and gardens laid out at Astarābād, Sārī and Tehran. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh built extensively both in Tehran and elsewhere.[18] His example was followed by some of his sons, including Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā at Kirmānshāh and ʿAbbās Mīrzā at Tabrīz, while subordinate notables such as the Vālī of Ardalān, the sardar of Erivan and the khans of Turshīz and Turbat-i Ḥaidarī attempted to do the same, although on a more modest scale.[19] Occasionally, members of the royal family (including women) provided such public amenities as water-cisterns, fountains and bridges, as well as commissioning bazaars and caravanserais as private investments. A few courtiers and high officials followed suit. Most 19th-century towns contained fine public residences, often elaborately designed and decorated, built for local notables and rich merchants.[20]

[17] Fraser, *op. cit.*, p. 38.

[18] See Jennifer M. Scarce, "The royal palaces of the Qajar dynasty; a survey," in *Qajar Iran*, ed. C.E. Bosworth and C. Hillenbrand (Edinburgh, 1983), pp. 335–8.

[19] Of the court of the Valī of Ardalān at Sanandaj (then, Sanna), Kinneir wrote that he "resides in a sumptuous palace, built on the top of a small hill in the centre of the town, where he maintains a degree of state and splendour, superior to anything I have seen in *Persia* , except at court" (*op. cit.*, pp. 144–145). See also Malcolm, *Sketches*, pp. 283–287, and Rich, *Narrative* I, pp. 197–220 and 240–53.

[20] See, e.g., A.A. Bakhtiar and R. Hillenbrand, "Domestic architecture in nineteenth-century Iran: the Manzil-i Sartîp Sidihî near Isfahan", in *Qajar Iran*, pp. 383–92.

The Qājār Shahs actively sponsored the building of new mosques or the extension of old ones. Existing examples can be seen in Tehran (Masjid-i Shāh and Masjid-i Sipahsālār), Qazvīn (Masjid-i Shāh), Kirmān (Masjid-i Bāzār-i Shāh), Kirmānshāh (Masjid-i Jāmiᶜ), and Simnān (Masjid-i Shāh). Almost all date from Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh's reign. Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh also spent generously on additions to the two shrines at Qum and Mashhad, as well as on the tomb of Shāh-Chirāgh in Shīrāz and of Shāh Niᶜmat-Allāh at Māhān. Nor were the Shīᶜī sanctuaries in Iraq forgotten.[21]

There was neither incentive nor the resources for the Qājārs to undertake the founding of new settlements or even the renovation of older sites, in the way that Shāh ᶜAbbās I had remodelled parts of Iṣfahān. Tehran, which had been a relatively unimportant meeting-point of converging roads under the Zands, was the dynasty's only enduring exercise in urban development, although Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh was said to have been planning the construction of a new capital near Karaj along European lines, with broad streets and open squares.[22] He also founded a new town at Sulṭānābād (now Arāk) in 1808 and seems to have toyed with the idea of reviving the old Ilkhanid site of Sulṭānīya.[23] Sometimes, however, a new settlement or suburb would grow up spontaneously in response to local needs. Typically, this would occur if there were a natural failure in the water-supply, calling for the sinking of new wells or the construction of new channels in a *qanāt* system. A modest example of this process of urban renewal was late 18th-century Turshīz, where the initiative came from the local ruler, ᶜAbd-Allāh Khān. George Forster, perhaps the first European to visit the town, wrote of it in 1784:

> Adjoining to old Turshish, called also Sultanabad, which is of small compass, and surrounded with a wall, Abedulla has built a new town, in an angle of which stands the karavansera, the only one I have seen in Persia, which is not interiorly supplied with water. The chief and his officers reside in the new quarter, where is also held the market.[24]

During the 19th century, it was those cities located closest to the frontiers, and therefore most exposed to attack, which were most likely to experience efforts at restoration and revival. The most conspicuous evidence of such activity was the repair or reconstruction of town walls and gateways. Tabrīz, as the residence of the heir-apparent, ᶜAbbās Mīrzā, between 1799 and 1831, and as

[21] R. Hillenbrand, "The role of tradition in Qajar religious architecture," in *Qajar Iran*, pp. 352–369. An inventory of Qājār religious buildings is a *lacuna* which must be filled before extensive research can be done on 19th-century Iranian architecture.

[22] Ouseley, *op. cit.* III, p. 374.

[23] Gavin R.G. Hambly, "A Note on Sultaniyeh/Sultanabad in the Early 19th Century".

[24] Forster, *Journey* II, pp. 165–6. See also Kinneir, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

a city of both commercial and strategic importance on account of its proximity to the Ottoman and Russian frontiers, began to recover from the state of decrepitude which had characterized it throughout the preceding century, but the pace was slow. Perhaps the authorities mistrusted their ability to prevent it falling into Russian hands.

There are a number of references to the repair of the fortifications of Kirmānshāh, Khūy, Erivan and Astarābād, all of which were adjacent to exposed frontiers. Khūy may have earned more praise from foreign visitors than any other city in Iran. Kinneir wrote raptuously of it: "There is no town in *Persia* better built or more beautiful than Khoee: the walls are in good repair; the streets are regular, shaded with avenues of trees; and the ceilings of many of the houses are painted with infinite taste."[25] Fraser, writing in 1834, thought that "Khoee, one of the few fortifications in Persia that approaches regularity, is a town of considerable size, and rather better laid out than usual . . . I observed many good houses in it . . . and though there was no want of ruins, the aspect of the place upon the whole was less mean than that of most towns in Persia. The bazar, . . . though dull and rather ill-filled, was extensive, and kept in tolerable repair."[26] Erivan was renowned for its strong natural defences and the impressive fortifications maintained by its governor between 1807 and 1827, the famous *sardār*, Ḥusain Qulī Khān, which were said to be the strongest in the country.[27]

Thus, restoration and renewal were not unknown to Iranian cities in the Qājār period, and some of the more elaborate construction schemes involved a considerable expenditure, the employment of large numbers of craftsmen and manual workers, and a demand for building-materials. Nevertheless 19th-century European travellers in Iran generally regarded the cities which they visited with contempt. Whether or not their attitude was the result of failure to encounter the anticipated splendours of the Orient of *The Thousand and One Nights*, of *Lalla Rookh*, or of Sir William Jones, with few exceptions they condemned Iranian cities for their squalor, dirt and decay. They repeatedly stressed the crumbling walls, dilapidated buildings, and neglected monuments, all of which clearly pointed to a marked decline in economic activity and population over the past century and a half since the time when Chardin and Tavernier were writing. These views were largely the expression of personal impressions, but they can not be dismissed. The decades of political anarchy and social disintegration which separated late Safavid from early Qājār times had

[25] Kinneir, *op. cit.*, p. 154. [26] Fraser, *A Winter Journey* I, p. 352.
[27] Ouseley, III, p. 440. For Ḥusain Qulī Khān, see George Bournoutian, "Ḥusayn Qulī Khān Qazvīnī".

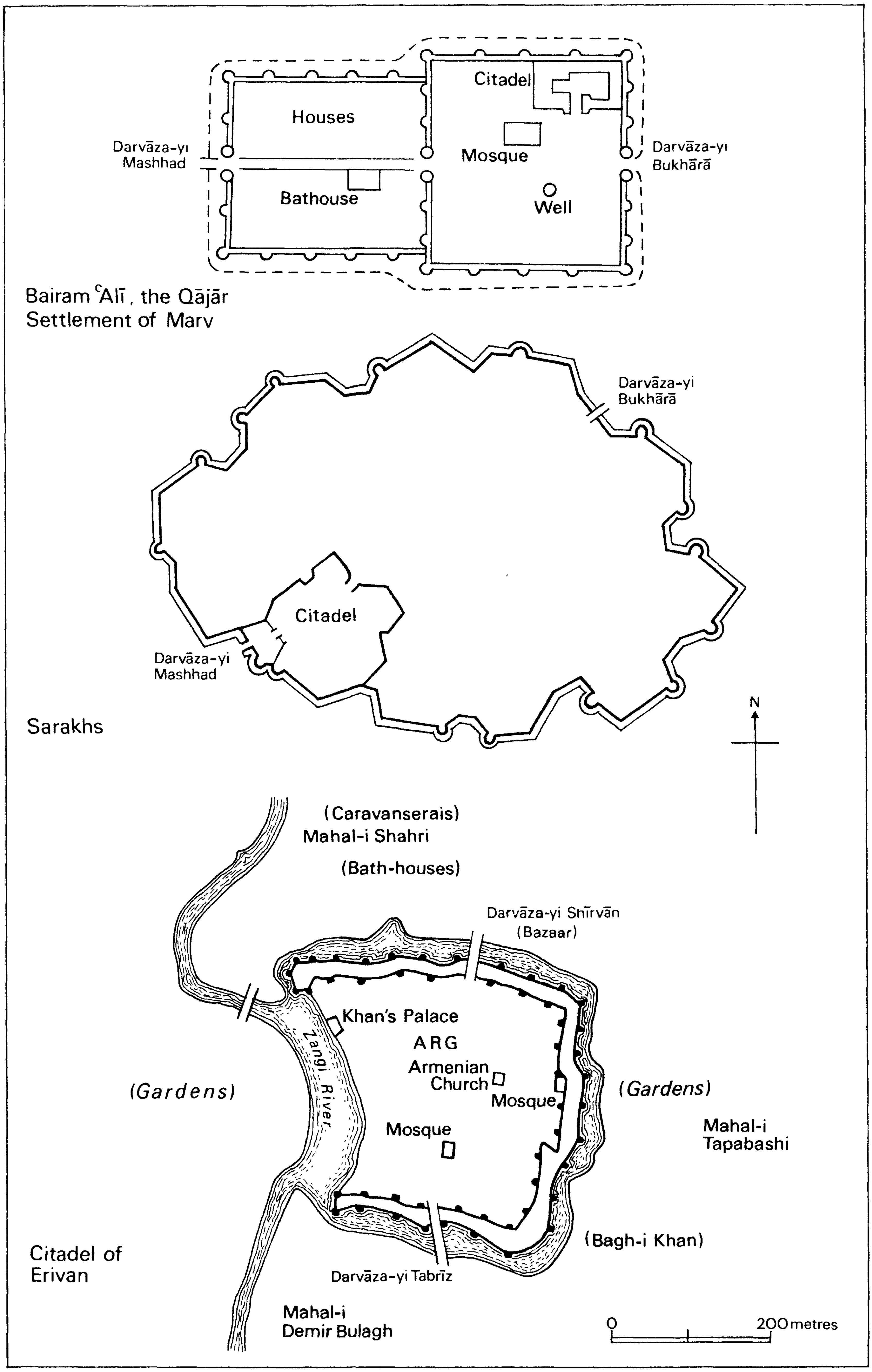


Fig. 2 Ground-plans of three 19th-century fortresses.

undoubtedly pressed hard upon the urban population. The results were obvious to virtually all foreign observers.

The general outlines of all the cities in *Persia* are the same. They are surrounded by a mud, and sometimes a brick wall, flanked at regular distances with round or square towers. The streets are narrow and dirty, having a gutter running through the centre; and the houses, which are low, flat-roofed, and built of brick or mud, have each a small court surrounded by a high wall. They have seldom or never any windows to the street; and that part of the sitting-rooms which fronts the court is entirely open, with a large curtain to let down when the rooms are not in use. The palaces of the nobility, although mean in their exterior appearance, are both convenient and elegant within . . . The *bazaars*, or market places, in some cities, particularly those of *Lar* and *Shirauz*, may be accounted handsome buildings, but the mosques, minarets, and colleges, are the chief ornaments of the Persian cities.[28]

Kinneir's summary description of a typical Iranian city in the first quarter of the 19th century is sustained repeatedly in the vignettes of contemporary or near-contemporary travellers, such as in Henry Layard's account of Burūjird: "The town . . . contains about twenty thousand inhabitants, and is the largest in the province. It possesses several handsome mosques, whose domes and minarets give it a striking and picturesque appearance from a distance, and stands in the midst of extensive gardens and orchards, irrigated by streams coming from the hills."[29]

Writers such as Kinneir and Layard sometimes misinterpreted what they saw; sometimes their reactions were idiosyncratic and their comments blandly opinionated; and they almost never had access to the kind of statistical data prized by modern social historians. As noted above, despite these limitations, such writings remain the most extensive source-material available for a conspectus of urban Iran on the eve of those profound changes which would take place as a result of increasing contact with the West. In order to illustrate both the usefulness and the limitations of the *genre* of travel-literature as applied to urban history, descriptions of two cities have been included here virtually *in extenso*. Although Sārī and Astarābād differed from urban centres on the plateau on account of terrain, climate and proximity to the Caspian, both were provincial capitals, both were major commercial entrepots, both were affected by proximity to the frontier (Sārī, by the Russian maritime presence in the Caspian ports, and Astarābād, by the Türkmen marches and, beyond them, Khiva), and both had been intimately connected with the early history of the Qājār dynasty.

George Forster, travelling in disguise from India to England, reached Sārī in January 1784, at a time when that city was still the capital of the rather

[28] Kinneir, *op. cit.*, pp. 52–3. [29] Layard, *Early Adventures*, 1894 edn., p. 105.

circumscribed territories controlled by Āghā Muḥammad Khān (at that juncture, absent from the city), and the entry in his diary reads:

On the 26th, at Sari, . . . a fortified town and the residence of Aga Mahomed Khan, the chief of Mazanderan, Asterabad, and some districts situate in Khorasan . . . The market of Sari is plentifully supplied with provisions, among which is seen the grey mullet, a fish abounding in all the rivers which fall into the southern shore of the Caspian sea.

Sari is rather a small town, but crowded with inhabitants, many of whom are merchants of credit, who resort thither for the purpose of supplying the chief and his officers with articles of foreign produce. A society of Armenians is established in the vicinity of the town, where they exercise a various traffic and manufacture a spirit distilled from grapes, of which Aga Mahomed drinks freely, though this habit does not seem to operate to the prejudice of the people. This chief has the reputation of being attentive to business, and of possessing an extensive capacity, which is indeed obvious to common notice, throughout all parts of his government. The walls of the town are kept in good condition and the ditch though narrow is deep, and sufficiently tenable against any forces now existing in this country.

A palace has been lately built at Sari, a commodious neat structure, though of limited size, and has a more compact appearance than any building which I have seen in Persia. The front is occupied by a small esplanade, on which are mounted three pieces of cannon, with carriages of good workmanship fixed on three wheels.[30]

At first glance, this account may not strike the reader as particularly informative, but it is not without its points of interest, including the market in fish, indicative of the source of protein in the Māzandarānī's diet. It shows Sārī as a resort of merchants, and a place which is both well-provisioned and well-protected, as well as being the headquarters of an able and effective local ruler. In fact, the three elements of a flourishing commerce, an adequate supply of basic commodities, and certain security went together. Forster noted that the merchants were drawn to Sārī to service the court, and from this the city benefitted. Aghā Muḥammad Khān's firm control over the surrounding countryside, symbolized by the new palace, with its guardian field-pieces. Were the latter made locally, or were they evidence of increasing commercial contacts with Russia?

Thus, in the earliest decades of Qājār hegemony, the link between urban prosperity and a stabilizing political presence was clearly, if inadvertently, recorded by this travelling Englishman. Nearly forty years later, his compatriot, James Baillie Fraser, visited Sārī, and his impressions were rather different.

It [Sari] was for a long time the residence of Aga Mahomed Khan, who . . . retreated to this province, and established himself at Saree, long before he gained the supreme power.

[30] Forster, *op. cit.* II, pp. 197–8.

The town may have been more populous and prosperous in former times than it now is; but there are no traces of it ever having covered more ground. Its circuit does not, I think, exceed two miles; and it is surrounded by a wall and ditch, which till lately have been suffered to fall so much into disrepair, that a man might, in many places, run down the ditch and up the face of the wall without difficulty. Some repairs were, however, at this time in progress . . .

There is no attempt at order or regularity within the town. The streets are left altogether unpaved, and are often quite impassable in bad weather, owing to the depth of the mud . . . Large open spaces are to be met with in many quarters, which are perfect swamps, and which in rainy weather become ponds of water, into which all sorts of filth are thrown. These cannot fail to have a very prejudicial effect upon the health of the inhabitants . . .

These strictures applied equally to the commercial quarters of the city:

The bazaars, which all communicate together, are extremely miserable, consisting of double rows or lanes of shops, few of them better than huts, which cross each other at right angles, and are covered from the sun and rain by sheds constructed of wood, tiles, and thatch. There are a few rows of booths of a still worse description at the end of these; and a dirty open space in the vicinity of the bazaars serves as a market-place, where every Thursday the produce of the country round, as sugar, cotton, grain, fruit, meat, fish, and vegetables, is brought to be exposed for sale. Articles of consumption are plentiful and cheap . . .

The last sentence echoes Forster's comment upon the availability of provisions in Sārī, but Fraser was far less impressed than his predecessor by the gubernatorial residence:

The palace, which was built by Aga Mahomed Khan, makes no great appearance externally; but I have been told that it formally contained much comfortable accommodation; certainly those parts of it which I saw were far from magnificent . . . All was clean and tolerably spacious, but without any splendour whatever. The whole of this palace, though not regularly fortified, is surrounded by a wall, and capable, to a certain extent, of defence.

There are five medressas or colleges in Saree, none of which are in any way conspicuous; and there are likewise five public baths of note, besides several smaller, and a few belonging to private individuals. I know of no other public buildings in the place.[31]

On the subject of Sārī's water-supply, an important matter for a Middle Eastern city, he noted that

there is a very fine old ābumbārā, or covered water cistern, of immense size, which is always used in the hot weather, and from its great depth and capacity, and the thickness of its vaulted roof, which protects the water from the heat of the sun, it is always cool and

[31] Fraser, *Caspian Sea*, pp. 39–42.

refreshing. Several of these ancient cisterns are to be found in different quarters of the town; and there is one of modern date, built, as I was informed, by the mother of Mahomed Koolee Meerza [governor of Mazandaran].[32]

Fraser, like all 19th-century travellers in Iran, was faced with the problem of trying to estimate the population of the cities which he visited. Of Sārī, he complained:

I have found that my attempts to ascertain the population of Saree were attended with the imperfect result too common to such enquiries. According to the best accounts, the town contains between three and four thousand houses; but as it is the seat of a court, and the residence of several noblemen attached to it, many of these houses contain from twenty to one hundred persons, so that a higher average than usual must be allowed to each house; probably there may be thirty to forty thousand souls within the walls.[33]

For all its obvious limitations, Fraser's account of Sārī provides considerable information on the capital of Māzandarān, even if his observations need to be collated with those of other visitors. Like Sārī, Astarābād exemplified in many ways the typical Iranian city of the Qājār period. It was of considerable strategic importance because it was located close to the Türkmen frontier, and it was the departure-point for caravans bound for Balkhan and Mangishlaq, and for Khiva. Once again, Fraser is an adequate guide.

The circuit of the present city [of Astarābād] is about three miles and a half; and it is surrounded with a wall of mud, once lofty, thick, and formidable, strengthened by numerous towers, and defended by a wide and deep ditch; but the wall has mouldered down to a mere mound of earth, upon which has lately been raised a parapet, of height sufficient to screen a man, and little more than a foot thick, loop-holed for musketry, and serving to connect such of the towers as yet remain, or have been rudely repaired; the ditch is nearly filled up with rubbish, and in most places has been converted into rice fields. It is needless to add, that the whole would prove quite indefensible against troops of the least resolution.

In former times the city was still more extensive, and the wall embraced within its circuit a strong fort called Kallah Khundān; but Nadr Shah [sic], jealous probably of its strength, and of the disposition of the inhabitants to rebel, ordered the fort to be demolished, and the town to be contracted to its present limits. Like most cities in Persia, the greater part is in ruins, and there are not now more than from two to three thousand houses within its walls.[34]

Fraser found the bazaars of Astarābād to be "tolerably extensive, but poorly filled", and he thought that there were "no buildings, either public or private, deserving of particular notice".[35] On the other hand, unlike travellers to other

[32] *Ibid*, p. 45. [33] *Ibid*, p. 46. [34] *Ibid*, p. 7. [35] *Ibid*, p. 9.

Iranian cities, who commented so unfavourably upon housing arrangements, he was much struck by the domestic architecture of Astarābād:

the extensive gardens and numerous trees which are mingled in all quarters with the buildings of the place, produce a very agreeable and varied effect, in opposition to the monotonous and sterile aspect of the grey mud-walls and roofs of the southern towns and villages. The houses, too, are picturesque and pleasing, both in shape and colour: they are constructed chiefly of wood, and frequently furnished with verandahs resting upon wooden pillars. The style of their architecture is light and open, more in the Indian than the Persian taste; the roofs raised to a pitch are covered sometimes with red tiles, sometimes with thatch, and extend far beyond the walls. Many houses are fitted up with lofty baudgeers [*bādgīrs*], literally "wind-catchers", square towers having openings on each side that act like windsails, conducting the wind into the rooms of a house, and which are used in many eastern towns, as Bushire and Bussora. They are built in the shape of towers, roofed with tiles, and produce an enlivening effect, equivalent to that of spires, in the landscape. There are besides numerous detached buildings of irregular forms, that contrast happily with the dead and lofty walls by which others are surrounded.

This account conveys the impression of an isolated but quite prosperous and self-contained community, quite typical of the more positive aspects of urban life in the early 19th century, but in one respect Fraser found Astarābād unique:

all the streets are well paved with stone; a regular drain runs along the centre of the principal ones, while a slighter hollow is seen in the smaller lanes and alleys, towards which the sides have a gradual inclination. This carries off the water, which in most other Persian cities stagnates in pools, or ploughs up and destroys the streets in its course. The inhabitants owe this essential addition to their comfort to Shah Abbas, who probably, at the same time that he made the great causeway through Mazunderān, ordered all the bazars and public streets to be paved, that they might be rendered passable in all weathers, which, it may be remarked, they could hardly ever be in so moist and rainy a climate, without such a precaution. The people are so sensible of the great utility of this measure, that they not only keep up the pavement of the public streets, but have causewayed all the small lanes leading to their private houses; an attention to neatness which gives to Astrabad an air of comfort and cleanliness to which we had long been strangers.[36]

Fraser thought that the palace of the deputy-governor, Badīᶜ al-Zamān Mīrzā, a ten or eleven year old grandson of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh, "a miserable establishment" and apparently he knew little or nothing of Astarābād's long association with the Qājārs, especially Āghā Muḥammad Khān. As has been mentioned already, such dynastic connections could be of great significance for the survival and growth of urban communities during the early Qājār period.

[36] *Ibid*, pp. 8–9. Compare Layard on Iṣfahān: "threading our way between mud-built houses, the most part falling in ruins, through narrow, paved streets, deep in dust and mud, and choked with filth and rubbish", *Early Adventures*, I, p. 309.

Astarābād had been Āghā Muḥammad Khān's birthplace and it seems that during the course of his lifetime he lavished upon it considerable attention. He repaired and strengthened the walls and gateways, had the ditch cleaned and widened, and converted a substantial amount of urban property into *vaqf*.[37] He also ordered the construction of a palace for himself (an inscription over the main gateway dates its construction to 1206/1791–2), and although Fraser found it to be so insignificant in 1822, James Morier, who viewed it in 1814, thought otherwise. It was, he wrote,

still an excellent building, even superior to the palaces of Teheran. It is entered as usual by a *maidan* or square, that leads to the principal gate, which is lofty, and well ornamented with gilding and paintings. . . . From the gate we entered into a large well paved court, planted with orange trees, now loaded with fruit. The farthest end of the court is occupied by a very lofty *Dewan Khaneh* or hall of audience, supported by two immense wooden pillars, and painted all over with the portraits of the old Persian heroes. On the sides are large rooms, also very curiously painted . . . and over them are suites of upper apartments, from the windows of which a great tract of the country surrounding the town is to be seen. Behind the Dewan Khaneh is a large *anderoon*, or the women's apartment, strongly secured by very massive doors.[38]

Both Sārī and Astarābād were the residences of governors who were members of the royal family. When such "prince-governors" were themselves able men, ambitious to develop the resources of their provinces, their capitals gained accordingly. Such was the case, to a limited extent, with Tabrīz under the rule of ʿAbbās Mīrzā, and Shīrāz under Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā, another of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's sons, but the most conspicuous example of a provincial capital benefitting from princely patronage was Kirmānshāh under Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's eldest son, Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā. This prince was beglerbegī of Kurdistān, Luristān and Khūzistān for some eighteen years prior to his death in 1821. During that time Kirmānshāh, as the official headquarters of his government, grew and prospered as a result of his deliberate efforts to improve it. His motives were partly political, partly pecuniary. Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā held fiercely to the conviction that he should be his father's successor and, had he outlived him, there can be little doubt that he would have vigorously disputed Muḥammad Shāh's accession.[39] With such ambitions, Kirmānshāh, strategically situated on the highway

[37] Rabino, *Māzandarān and Astarābād*, p. 76. [38] Morier, *Second Journey*, pp. 376–7.

[39] Although Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā was Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's eldest son, his mother was merely a Georgian concubine in the Shah's harem, and therefore he was excluded from the succession in favour of his half-brother, ʿAbbās Mīrzā, who was of Qājār descent on both sides. Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, an able, energetic warrior, bitterly resented this exclusion and competed, with great success, against ʿAbbās Mīrzā for the loyalty of both the military and the *ʿulamā*. Probably it was only his premature death in 1821 which prevented a life-and-death struggle with the heir-apparent, of which the outcome would have been far from certain.

between Tehran and Baghdad, and a natural strongpoint from which to overawe the tribes of the province, possessed for him a special importance. First, it provided an excellent base where he could recruit and train a military force capable of keeping in check his Kurdish neighbours, and especially the powerful Vālī of Ardalān; of threatening the Ottoman *vilāyat* of Baghdad; and, when the time was ripe, of sallying forth to win for him the Peacock Throne. Furthermore, it served as a safe refuge where, if threatened or attacked by rivals, he could maintain himself for an extended period, knowing that his family, his treasure and his arsenal were secure. Finally, it provided an appropriate setting for his growing prestige and pretensions.

In this way, Kirmānshāh, which had been a conspicuous casualty of the disorders of the 18th century, acquired a new lease of life. First, Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā strengthened and extended the city's fortifications. Then, he constructed a suitable palace to serve as the setting for his court, which was an imitation of that of his father in Tehran. Thereafter, he commissioned various public buildings, including bazaars and caravanserais, which he leased to traders at a profit.[40] Finally, he offered positive incentives for merchants and craftsmen to settle in his capital, thereby increasing his annual revenues and providing the means for him to expand his forces and enlarge his authority. The life of the city acquired a quickened tempo. Its appearance was refurbished by Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā's building programme, which created a demand for labour and materials. The court and garrison provided an expanding market for goods and services. This, in turn, stimulated the circulation of coin in the bazaar and promoted mercantile activity both within the city itself and in the surrounding villages, since there was now an increased demand for foodstuffs and fodder.[41] Furthermore, Kirmānshāh was situated on a major trade-route used extensively by merchants and pilgrims passing between the Iranian plateau and the *vilāyat* of Baghdad, where the Shīʿī shrine-cities of Najaf and Karbalā were under Ottoman rule. Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā's strict administration of justice and his firm

[40] A contemporary was told that Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā was "a great speculator and trader, and encourages commerce in others, as far as such a disposition in himself will admit of it without thwarting his own personal interests", Buckingham, *op. cit.*, I, p. 178.

[41] No reliable figures are available for the size of the garrison of Kirmānshāh under Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā. In 1809, according to an eye-witness (Monteith, *Kars and Erzeroum*, pp. 58–9), the prince led a daring raid into Russian-occupied territory between Erivan and Tiflis with 25,000 cavalry, but it is unlikely that this force was made up exclusively of his own provincial levies. Buckingham, in 1816, heard that a force of a thousand infantry and five hundred cavalry was maintained in and around Kirmānshāh distinct from the tribal auxiliaries upon whom the prince could call in an emergency (Buckingham, *op cit.*, I, p. 180). These, with their families and servants, together with numerous hangers-on of the court, would provide local grain-merchants, suppliers of fodder, and market-gardeners with regular business.

handling of the tribes within his jurisdiction undoubtedly increased the security of the caravans passing through his territories, and from this he benefitted both materially and in reputation.

Even without such measures, Kirmānshāh, with its favourable location on the caravan-routes, would probably have benefitted from the relative stability which characterized the early Qājār period and which some observers believed had greatly enlarged the commerce of the kingdom.[42] But with Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā's death in 1821, Kirmānshāh entered upon a period of internal dislocation and economic decline as the city passed from one governor to another, all of whom seemed to be venal, weak, or a combination of both. An English traveller in 1844 noted the city's "mean appearance" and felt that "decay presents itself whichever way the eye of the spectator turns".[43] Of Kirmānshāh in 1845, an acute French observer wrote:

> Mohamed Ali [Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā], feeling the necessity of attaching the population to his interests, administered the affairs of his government in a truly paternal manner. His charities had enriched the town, and the people lived in the enjoyment of plenty. Unhappily they were driven out of it by the tyranny of his successors, who considered nothing but their personal interests. Now the splendid bazaars of Kermansháh are deserted; nine tenths of the shops are shut; and if some unlucky fellow, imagining the possibility of gaining a trifling profit, exposes a few goods, his venture rapidly disappears under the hands of an undisciplined soldiery, who give themselves up to every description of excess, certain that they do so with impunity.[44]

On the subject of the administration of one of Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā's successors, Muḥibb ʿAli Khān Mākūʾī Shujāʿ al-Daula (beglerbegī of Kirmānshāh, 1841–8), yet another traveller wrote:

> When I was in Kermansháh, in 1846, I witnessed the most distressing spectacle I ever beheld. The province was fearfully oppressed by this fiend in human shape, Mohib Ali Khan, who had bought its government from Hadji Mirza Agassi. He had coolly seized what every man possessed, and had driven away their flocks and herds to his own estates at Makoo near Ararat. The people were picking grass in the fields to eat, and the children were naked and emaciated, except the stomach which was unnaturally swollen . . . In one street I passed through in the town, the people were lying on each side at the last gasp of death from starvation. I shall never forget one whole family, father, mother, and several children, lying together in a heap, unable to move from inanition.[45]

Whether such horrors were directly due to the extortions of the governor, or to factors beyond the control of the rather ineffective provincial bureaucracy, it

[42] Brydges, *Transactions*, p. 433. [43] Jones, "Narrative", p. 289.
[44] Ferrier, *Caravan Journeys*, pp. 24–5.
[45] This anonymous quotation appears in *ibid*, p. 25.

is significant of public feeling that, as soon as the news of the death of Muḥammad Shāh in September 1848 reached Kirmānshāh, the inhabitants rose against their oppressor, who fled to Āẕarbāījān, never to return. This is not an isolated instance of the way in which, given half a chance, outraged townspeople would turn on their oppressors.

The passages quoted above reflected the contemporary viewpoint that the fortunes of a particular town or district at any given time depended to a very large extent upon the character and competence of the local officials. Obviously, there were other, no less volatile or unpredictable factors at work, but the personal element cannot be disregarded in assessing the fluctuating fortunes of different urban centres. Not only Kirmānshāh, but the well-being of 19th-century Iṣfahān, Mashhad, Shīrāz and Tabrīz was inextricably linked with the actions of successive governors. Astarābād benefitted from royal favour towards a city whose history had been so intimately connected with that of the Qājārs. Sulṭānābād in Arāk was literally willed into being as a result of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's decision to found a new town there. Yet even more significant than dynastic caprice, it was good and bad harvests, storms and drought, protracted outbreaks of lawlessness in a hinterland or along a trade route, and changes in supply and demand in distant markets, perhaps the result of movements in world trade beyond the comprehension of those who were the victims of them, which had most effect upon the lives of the urban population.

The distance between the larger cities, as well as most of the smaller towns, contributed not only to their physical and psychological isolation, and to an abiding parochialism, but made it impossible to move bulk commodities (and especially food) over considerable distances. Thus, urban communities could be exposed to quite local but extremely severe shortages of basic needs as a result of regional crop-failures which, because of the distances involved, the condition of roads unsuitable for wheeled vehicles, and the lack of navigable rivers, could not be offset by imports from other regions. As a result, famine conditions could develop very quickly, and although only a limited area might be stricken, the authorities were incapable of doing anything about it. The accounts of European travellers in 19th-century Iran are replete with references to droughts, crop-failures, local shortages, and sometimes (as in the case of Kirmānshāh in 1846), devastating famines. The extent of these disasters and their impact upon the economic life and social fabric of the communities involved deserve detailed research.

Another sporadic but ever-present hazard was the outbreak of an epidemic for which no cure was known at the time and from which there was no respite

until the particular scourge disappeared as mysteriously (in the eyes of its victims) as it had come. Cities which attracted large numbers of pilgrims, such as Mashhad, or through which pilgrims and corpses passed to the shrine-cities of Iraq, such as Hamadān and Kirmānshāh, were particularly vulnerable to sudden outbreaks. In 1830, for example, cholera and plague, sweeping through the eastern vilāyats of the Ottoman Empire, eventually spread into Iran as far as Gīlān, Māzandarān and Gurgān.[46] Naturally, Kirmānshāh and Hamadān were among the first Iranian cities to be affected as the pilgrims returning from Iraq mingled in the crowded bazaars and spread disease. Both cholera and plague continued to take their toll for a period of some four years, depopulating towns and villages, and disrupting commercial and manufacturing activities. What all this meant in terms of population-growth can only be a matter of guesswork, but Fraser, entering Kirmānshāh in February 1835, has left a graphic picture of utter desolation.

> Till within these three or four months, the place has been constantly ravaged by the plague, which clung to it for three years uninterruptedly, and carried off nine-tenths of the inhabitants. The first object we observed on approaching the place, was an extent of acres, absolutely, of fresh graves – that is, all within these two years. The next were the roofless walls of the houses whose inhabitants now tenanted these graves. The gate of the town itself was fallen in, so as scarcely to leave a passage for our horses, and we rode along almost entirely through ruins to the caravanserai where we put up.[47]

Similar accounts of other places in other years indicate a fearful mortality from epidemics, famine, and the diseases which accompany protracted malnutrition. Survival in 19th-century Iran could be precarious. Thus, in 1840, Layard wrote: "Shushtar was at one time a prosperous and wealthy city, as is proved by the many well-built houses which it contains, for the most part, however, deserted and falling to ruins. The plague, cholera, and bad government had reduced it to a very poverty-stricken and desolate state. The plague alone, which had desolated the province of Khūzistān in 1831 and 1832, had, it was said, carried off nearly 20,000 of its inhabitants." In Dizfūl, it was the same story. "These frequent feuds [between rival families in the town], added to the plague, cholera, and misgovernment, had greatly reduced the population, and left a considerable part of the town in ruins. . . ."[48]

In spite of these hazards, however, the comparative isolation of 19th century Iran's urban communities enabled them to maintain their traditional patterns of life, subject to only sporadic interference from outside. The growing literature

[46] Fraser, *Travels in Koordistan, Mesopotamia, etc.* I, p. 251. [47] *Ibid*, II, pp. 193–4.
[48] Layard, *op. cit.*, II, p. 293.

relating to the Muslim city has frequently addressed the question of the extent to which the traditional Middle Eastern city was able to develop autogenous, if not autonomous institutions.[49] What is clear is that, if it never came close to evolving the kind of self-governing corporate institutions characteristic of medieval Europe, its inhabitants did enjoy (although *de facto* rather than *de jure*) a substantial degree of internal self-government, if, by that term, is understood the day-to-day regulation of the city by its own indigenous patriciate, rather than by external regulatory agents. These patriciates were, typically, composed of inter-related families of prominent merchants, but might also include leaders among the city *ᶜulamā* and some local landlords. In 19th century Iran, the leaders of ward and city, the *kadkhudā* and the *kalāntar*, spokesmen on behalf of the citizens with the Shah's representatives, were recruited from this patriciate.

In Qājār times formal relationships between the Shah's government and the cities were derived from Safavid precedents. Most large centres were the headquarters of a provincial government and served as the permanent residence of the provincial governor, or beglerbegī, but the latter was concerned with much more than the affairs of his capital. It was the business of the province as a whole (and sometimes more than one province) which absorbed much of his attention, and he often spent long periods of time away from his headquarters, pursuing rebels, mediating with restless tribes, and forcibly collecting taxes. Not all provincial governors were Qājār princes. Some were men of quite humble origin and these would not be expected to maintain the quasi-royal state of Ḥusain ᶜAlī Mīrzā in Shīrāz or Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā in Kirmānshāh. Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Khān, who was appointed beglerbegī of Fārs by Āghā Muḥammad Khān before becoming his Ṣadr-i Aᶜẓam, came from a merchant family of Shīrāz; Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Amīn al-Daula, appointed beglerbegī of Iṣfahān province by Āghā Muḥammad Khān, was a former grocer; and Manūchihr Khān Gurgī Muᶜtamad al-Daula, the beglerbegī of Iṣfahān province during the reign of Muḥammad Shāh in the 1840s, was a Georgian eunuch. In the case of the former two it can be taken for granted that they were more familiar with local conditions in Shīrāz and Iṣfahān than any scion of the royal house. But irrespective of the background of the beglerbegī, the presence of his entourage was a fact of life to the inhabitants of the city in which he resided. On the one hand, as has been noted above, they had to bear the cost of court and courtiers, and put up with the extortions and brutality of petty officials and soldiers; on the

[49] E.g., Grunebaum, *Islam*, pp. 141–58; Lapidus, *Middle Eastern Cities*, pp. 47–79; Hourani and Stern, *The Islamic City*, pp. 9–50; and Brown, *From Madina to Metropolis*, pp. 51–69.

other, the material requirements of the governor's civil and military establishment boosted local business.

What was the nature of the relationship between these governors and the people among whom they resided? Who were the agents who rendered the will of a distant Shah into specific fiscal and other directives? In most instances, the governor and his entourage were "outsiders" to the townspeople and, by definition, parasitic in relation to the community in which they lived, so that, in general, individuals in trouble must have found it prudent not to bring themselves to the attention of the authorities, but to rely upon the experience and judgement of locally-appointed leaders who were drawn from the patriciate of the city. In 1954 Professor A.K.S. Lambton published an authoritative review of urban institutions during the Qājār period which subsequent research has expanded but not substantially altered.[50] The difficulty in attempting to clarify the mechanisms of provincial and local government in 19th-century Iran is primarily due to the fact that the relevant data derives from specific examples embedded in surviving documents, personal or family biographies, or foreign travellers' reports, and as such defy reduction to general principles of administration. The individual references contradict as often as they tally with each other; one example relates to a particular city or area, while another is taken from another part of the country, or a different decade. Moreover, in Qājār Iran there was none of that concern for consistency of title and function which is the instinctive hallmark of the modern administrative historian.

Bearing this in mind, it is clear that the usual intermediary between the city populace and the Shah's representative, the beglerbegī, was the office-holder known as the kalāntar. Under the Safavids, the kalāntar was to be found in every major city, with a role and functions not very dissimilar from those of the *ra'īs* of Saljūq times. He was appointed to his office by the Shah, but he was usually a local man of some standing, and in selecting him consideration seems to have been given to the community's preferences.[51] His principal duties consisted of the regulation of the craft-guilds and supervisory responsibility for the city wards (*maḥal*), each one of which was in the charge of a kadkhudā. It seems that during the interregnum between the fall of the Safavid dynasty and the consolidation of Qājār rule, the office of kalāntar acquired increased importance and independence as a result of the collapse of the central government, and there

[50] Lambton, *Islamic Society in Persia*, pp. 9–15 and 24–7. See also Floor, "The Office of Kalāntar", and "The Market-Police".

[51] Lambton, *op. cit.*, p. 12, citing a document from the Zand period.

must have been times when the kalāntar was the only effective voice for continuity and order in a city. The Qājārs, no great innovators in administration, retained the office, having no reason to dispense with it, and it is likely that those kalāntars who were quick to accept the new order, contributed substantially towards the stabilization and legitimation of the new régime among the urban population, while at the same time helping to mitigate the ferocity and rapacity of the new ruling élite. Certainly, they provided the link between the old and the new as far as local political authority was concerned. Indeed, some kalāntars passed effortlessly into the ranks of the higher office-holders of the Qājār court. Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Khān, for example, had been kalāntar of Shīrāz at the time when he attracted the notice of Āghā Muḥammad Khān; Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān Amīn al-Daula had been kalāntar of Iṣfahān before becoming beglerbegī of the province and, later, *mustaufi al-mamālik*. To 19th-century European observers, the kalāntar was the Shah's "eyes and ears" while, at the same time, helping to alleviate the naked despotism of the régime. Thus, like the *qāẓī* of a city, he not infrequently found himself in the invidious position of having to mediate between tyrannical authorities and desperate subjects. But for those Europeans who took an interest in local government, he was simply the Iranian equivalent of a mayor or, perhaps more accurately, *un maire*. Morier, for example, described him as

> the medium through which the wishes and wants of the people are made known to the King; he is their chief and representative on all occasions, and brings forward the complaints of the Rayats, whenever they feel oppressed. He also knows the riches of every Rayat, and his means of rendering the annual tribute; he therefore regulates the quota that every man must pay.[52]

The allocation of taxes among the wards of the city, and the detailed commission of royal orders, devolved upon the kadkhudās, the officially-appointed heads of the various wards into which every city was divided. The ward, or quarter, was a distinct entity within the larger unit of the city, delineated spatially by walls and gateways, which at night or in periods of crisis enabled each ward to function as an *urbs in urbe*. Wards might have their origin in initial settlement patterns, ethnic or tribal exclusiveness, sectarian solidarity or occupational definition, but each one perceived itself as a self-sufficing unit in relation to neighbouring wards or the city as a whole. Since Safavid times the official head of each ward had been the kadkhudā, who had been almost invariably selected from among the most prominent residents of that ward.

[52] Morier, *Journey*, pp. 235–6.

According to the *Tazkirat al-Mulūk*, a Safavid administrative manual of the late 17th century, the kadkhudā was appointed at the end of the following process. The leading inhabitants of a ward presented the name of a preferred candidate for the office of kadkhudā to the kalāntar, together with a testimonial and an agreed figure for his salary, to be paid by the whole ward. If the person named was acceptable to the kalāntar, the latter issued a formal confirmation of his appointment and then presented the newly-appointed kadkhudā with a robe of honour (*khilᶜat*).[53]

The office of kadkhudā, like that of kalāntar, lost none of its importance during the interregnum between Safavids and Qājārs. In Fārs, at the opening of the 19th century, what impressed Edward Scott Waring was the way in which almost all aspects of local government seemed to fall within the purview of the kadkhudā. His account is sufficiently detailed to be worth quoting in full, not least because it implicitly brings out the concept of a hierarchy of control: from kadkhudā to kalāntar, from kalāntar to *ḥākim* (city governor) and, although Scott Waring omits this link in the chain, from ḥākim to beglerbegī.

> The city of Sheeraz is divided into Muhuls [wards], over which a Kud Khoda or superintendant presides, but who receives no salary for executing this duty. This office is generally conferred on the most respectable man of the ward, and over all these Khud Khodas another is appointed [presumably, the *kalāntar* is meant here], who receives their reports, and communicates them to the governor. It was formerly the custom for them to report the minutest transaction which might happen in their wards; the birth of a child, a marriage or death was instantly conveyed to the ears of the Hakim. This practice is dispensed with at Sheeraz, but is still, I believe, observed in some cities. It is the duty of the Kud Khoda to acquaint himself with the trade and occupation of the different persons who reside in the ward, and of the means they have of subsistence.
>
> But the great advantage which results from this division of the city, not only to the government, but also to the inhabitants, is on the sudden arrival of a large body of troops, or when the city is laid under contribution. In either case, the Kud Khodas attend the governor, who informs them what number of men their wards must accommodate, or what sum of money it is requisite they should contribute. They are responsible to the governor; and it is their business to make such an arrangement, that each individual shall suffer in proportion to his capacity to bear this act of violence. The people are generally satisfied with their decisions; for it is needless for them to desist, and often dangerous to delay.
>
> The licentiousness of the troops is thus prevented by their finding houses ready to receive them; and an indiscriminate plunder is averted by a compliance with the terms of the conqueror . . .

[53] V. Minorsky, *Tadhkirat al-Mulūk* (London, 1943), p. 81.

As in the case of the kalāntar, the kadkhudā functioned as a mediator between government and people, and as a cushion against extreme oppression.

There is often a degree of weight attached to the representations of the Kud Khodas, which serves as a strong restraint on the oppression of a governor. In the event of their suffering greatly from the rapacity or tyranny of the Hakim, they sign a petition, representing the cause of complaint, and praying for redress. It is seldom that the king refuses to grant their request. They are the mediators for the poor people; and despots have the sense to know, that oppression, carried beyond a certain extent, can be but of short duration.

In addition, Scott Waring represents the kadkhudā as a kind of family guidance counsellor as well as ombudsman:

In all the little trifling disputes which occur among neighbours, the Kud Khoda exerts his influence to bring them to an amicable termination, and frequently with good success. If a husband and wife disagree, he endeavours to effect a reconciliation by remonstrating with the husband, and through the medium of a Kud Banoo (a kind of governess), with the wife. In short, it is his business to be a peace-maker, and to exert himself for the good of the community over which he presides.[54]

This account of the kadkhudā's place in society appears excessively benign – some kadkhudās must have been petty tyrants of their *maḥal*s – yet most contemporary notices confirm Scott Waring's impressions. The kadkhudā was the principal agent by means of whom the government ensured that its wishes were carried out among the urban population, while he kept it regularly informed as to the state of public opinion and drew attention to popular exasperation with official exactions. In this way, he became a genuine mediator between those for whom he was answerable (of which world, he himself was a part) and the authorities above (ḥākim, beglerbegī, etc.) who were expected to behave capriciously and harshly. Thus he was a part of what Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie has termed the "intermediary stage of intercession", for in 19th-century Iran, as in 14th-century Occitan, "an intercessionary stage did exist, providing always some possibility of reconciliation between the oppression practised by the dominating forces and the ordinary people's need for security".[55]

The kadkhudā and the kalāntar, despite some ambiguity in their functions and loyalties, served as spokesmen of a kind for the urban population, although doubtless they used their influence in the first instance to advance the interests of family, friends and clients. Distinct from them, however, were those government-appointed officials whose functions were primarily law-enforcement and

[54] Scott Waring, *Tour*, pp. 64–5. [55] Ladurie, *Montaillou*, p. 14.

who were universally feared for their brutality and venality. Among these officials the most important was the *dārūgha-yi bāzār*, the superintendant of the markets, who was in fact the city chief of police. In some form or other, the office had long been ubiquitous throughout the Muslim world, in Safavid Iran, in Ottoman Turkey or Mughul India. The Qājārs inherited the office from their predecessors and naturally retained it, although the functions attached to it changed during the course of the 19th century. The *dārūgha*'s duties as superintendant of markets are precisely described by Fraser, as he observed them in the bazaars of Rasht in 1822: "A darogha, or supervisor, sits all day in an office near the centre of the bazar, whose duty it is to regulate all disputes and matters of market police, to watch over weights and measures, and be answerable for order, cleanliness, and regularity."[56] Scott Waring's description, based upon observations in Shīrāz, bears out the general accuracy of Fraser's account, but alludes to some of the broader and more sinister activities of the post.

> The Darogha, or superintendant of the Bazars, holds his office from government; it is his duty to settle the disputes that may occur in the markets, and to hear the complaints of the people of the Bazar. If a shopkeeper refuses to execute, or violates his agreement, you make your complaint to the Darogha, who obliges him to perform it; or, if he should prove that he is totally unable, he grants him a certain time for its performance. The humanity of the Moosulman law grants a merchant an opportunity of recovering himself from unforeseen misfortunes. But if the person complained against is of an infamous character, a fine is imposed on him, and the Darogha orders him either to be punished or put in confinement.
>
> The Darogha of the Bazar likewise superintends the morals of the people; and if he detects any of them drinking wine, or in the society of courtezans, he compels them to purchase his connivance at no small expence.
>
> [. . .] He has a large establishment under him, who are employed in preserving the peace of the markets, and in apprehending persons whom they detect acting contrary to the orders of the Darogha.
>
> This appointment is considered to be very lucrative; for, in additon to the presents and bribes he is in the habit of receiving, the people of the Bazar furnish him with every thing he requires, that they may ensure his protection and favour.[57]

Some of the functions of the dārūgha-yi bāzār were among those often undertaken elsewhere by the *muḥtasib* (as in the case of late Mughul India), but in Qājār Iran the division of responsibility between the muḥtasib and the dārūgha-yi bāzār seems to have been ill-defined. Regarding the background to these overlapping jurisdictions, Professor Lambton writes: "The affairs of the citizens were also closely affected by the muḥtasib, who since early times had been

[56] Fraser, *Caspian Sea*, p. 149. [57] Scott Waring, *Tour*, pp. 67–8.

in charge, among other things, of weights and measures, the fixing of prices and the affairs of the bazaar in general. His functions were largely concerned with the enforcement of the provisions of the *sharīʿa*. There was, however, some clash of jurisdiction between the muḥtasib and the 'civil' officials. In Saljūq times this clash was mainly with the *ṣāḥib al-shurṭa*, and in the later period with the kalāntar and the dārūgha. From early Islamic times down to the 17th century the muḥtasib's powers were broadly speaking unchanged . . . Towards the end of the Safavid period, however, it seems that those functions of the muḥtasib which had concerned the prevention of offences against the sharīʿa were taken over by the dārūgha."[58] This development may have reflected a general withdrawal of the Shīʿī *ʿulamā* from involvement in state-associated matters, but such was certainly the prevailing situation at the beginning of the Qājār period, and it seems that the office of muḥtasib, as it had existed for centuries, withered away in the early and middle decades of the 19th century. Robert Binning asserted that it had been abolished in the mid 1850s.[59] It was to be subsequently revived during the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, but as a non-religious office.[60]

The dārūgha-yi bāzār had, in addition, another, apparently separate police establishment charged with the overall protection of the city, and especially with guarding the bazaars at night. The subordinate officers in charge of this force were known variously as *mīr ʿasas*, *mīr aḥdāth*, and *keshīkchī bāshī*. Regarding the *mīr ʿasas* in Shiraz, Scott Waring writes:

> It is his office to preserve the peace of the city, to take up persons who may be out of their houses at improper hours, and to prevent robberies. He has a number of people under him for this purpose, who patrole [sic] the streets, and keep watch on the top of the houses. Each shopkeeper in the Bazar contributes about two or three pence a month to defray the expences of this establishment. If a house-keeper is robbed, the Meer Usus, or Kucheek-chee-bashee (the head of the watch), are accountable for the robbery, and are obliged either to produce the property stolen, or pay the amount. This rarely happens, for the Meer Usus is generally connected with all the thieves in the city, and can answer for their obedience to his orders. They rob, therefore, in places not under his protection; and, as it is commonly supposed he participates in their plunder, they are connected with each other by a common interest.[61]

Whether this "connection" is to be regarded as a case of setting a thief to catch a thief, or as evidence of blurred distinctions between law-breakers and law-enforcers at the lower levels of society, it appears that public opinion generally made little distinction between those who were designated criminals

[58] Lambton, *op. cit.*, pp. 13–14. [59] Binning, *Journal* I, pp. 337–8.
[60] Floor, "The Market-Police", pp. 222–4. [61] Scott Waring, *Tour*, p. 68.

and the representatives of the law, who were commonly regarded with fear and loathing. Moreover, both were to be found, side-by-side, in those gatherings of hooligans which formed so quickly to protest a government edict, assist in a clash of rival dervishes, insult a foreign embassy, plunder Armenian or Jewish shops, or in the second half of the 19th century, lynch a Bābī or a Bahāʾī.[62]

Frequently, such hooligans are termed *lūṭī*s. Binning, for example, in mid-19th-century Shīrāz, believed that the so-called lūṭis were recruited from all segments of society and involved themselves in a range of activities in which the fraternal, the vigilante and the criminal were scarcely distinguishable. He wrote: "These villains have a kind of freemasonry among themselves, and their society includes not only those who live by their wits, such as thieves, robbers, pimps, gamblers, etc., but also a considerable number of the shopkeepers, artisans, and even some of the higher classes."[63] Charitably, their behaviour might be explained away as a means of burning up excess youthful energy, but clearly the role of the lūṭis in urban society under the Qājārs presents the historian with some real epistomological problems. These are implicitly stated in Professor Lambton's able summary of the place of the lūṭi in the 19th century Iranian city:

> There is evidence of the existence in the nineteenth century of associations which are not dissimilar to the earlier associations of *ʿayyār*, namely the associations of *lūṭī*s or *dāshhā*. These were local associations, whose objects were the preservation of public morality in the district to which they belonged, the protection of the district from robbers, to which end they would patrol the district at night, and the education of the orphans and the poor children of the district. They caused levies to be made on the rich people of the district and distributed the proceeds to the poor. They had a gild organization. Only persons of good character were admitted . . .
>
> The *zūrkhāna*s, institutions where a certain type of wrestling and gymnastic exercise were practised, were in many cases run by these local associations . . . These associations, like the craft gilds and the *futuwwa* orders, had an ʿAlid tinge.
>
> As in the case of the gilds of *ʿayyār* these associations of *lūṭī*s also frequently degenerated into bands of hooligans, and as such would levy toll upon the people of the quarter in which they were . . . In more modern times the *lūṭī* and *dāsh* has become something of a term of abuse, but even among the *lūṭīhā* and *dāshhā* of the modern Persian city the old conception of chivalry is not wholly absent, and a certain *esprit de corps* prevails among them.[64]

Until a definitive investigation into the structure of Qājār urban society has been undertaken, analysis of the social composition and diverse roles of the *lūṭī*s must remain largely tentative, but the beginnings of a scholarly debate have been

[62] A particularly graphic account of such a lynching is described by Muḥammad ʿAlī Jamālzāda in his *Sar va Tah-i Yak Karbās*, translated by W.L. Heston, pp. 56–8.

[63] Binning, *op. cit.*, I, p. 273. [64] Lambton, *op. cit.*, pp. 18–19.

articulated. William M. Floor, in particular, has sought to differentiate among several categories of persons hitherto designated lūṭis.[65] He suggests differentiation into three groups: first, entertainers (i.e., singers, dancers, storytellers, actors, acrobats and wrestlers); secondly, members of ᶜ*ayyar*-like fraternities, whom he calls *lūṭīgar*s and whom Reza Arasteh styles *javānmard*s, and whom both associate, in particular, with the *zūrkhāna*s; and finally, gangs of ruffians (*aubāsh*) who flourished whenever the authorities seemed weak or indecisive, largely because they enjoyed the protection of influential patrons. The latter might be local landlords, ambitious merchant families (like the Qavām family in Shīrāz), or members of the ᶜulamā. Affiliation to any one of the three groups identified by Floor would not necessarily exclude the possibility of linkages with the other two. What seems certain is that whether they are called lūṭis, lūṭīgars or aubāsh, and whether they are regarded as lower-class vigilantes or gangs of law-breakers, these associations were an ever-present factor in practically all the larger cities during the Qājār period, and that they were sometimes able, with a little prodding from their patrons, to take over wards and even an entire city in times of acute crisis.

Lūṭī violence, especially when it was directed against religious minorities or foreigners, was often ᶜulamā-inspired. The social rôle of the ᶜulamā in Qājār society has yet to be researched definitively, but it can be safely postulated that no town of any consequence was without its clerical families, and that while in some, a clerical preponderance was more in evidence than in others, the influence of the ᶜulamā upon Iran's urban communities was extremely pervasive. To speak of clerical families is no misnomer. Since celibacy was not required of the ᶜulamā, clerics were normally married men with families, and the occupation tended, like any other, to be passed from father to sons and from uncle to nephews. Collectively, the 19th-century ᶜulamā encompassed a very broad spectrum of professional and economic interests. Some were *muʾaẕẕin*s attached to particular mosques; others were scholars and teachers; others, again, exercised judicial authority, were qāẓis or muḥtasibs, and played a conspicuous part in public affairs. Some ᶜulamā were comfortably placed. A few were very wealthy. Others, in charge of a small mosque or shrine in a decaying hamlet, or dependent upon revenue from a mismanaged *vaqf*, or a *vaqf* of diminishing income, were little better than their neighbours who earned their bread by the sweat of their brows. But individually, as well as collectively, the ᶜulamā exercised enormous authority, although often exerted quite informally. They

[65] Migeod, "Die Lūṭīs; Arasteh, *Lutis*; Arasteh, "*Zūrkhāna*"; Floor, "The Lūṭīs"; and Floor, "The Political Role of the Lutis".

mediated disputes and defused conflicts, they enforced moral and social conformity by exemplification and exhortation, and they sometimes even defied the officials appointed by the Shah, to the point of bringing the mob onto the streets. The Qājār regime placated and sustained the ᶜulamā, but instinctively feared them. Public opinion viewed them not very differently from the way in which lay Christians in late medieval Europe viewed the Christian clergy. Genuine piety and learning, eloquence in preaching and a charismatic personality won wide recognition and sincere reverence, but the greedy, lustful or hypocritical *ākhūnd* or *mullā* was the butt of teahouse gossip and ribaldry.

In terms of the social structure, those ᶜulamā who were accorded high status in the community usually enjoyed close familial links with other local leaders such as merchants of substance or landowners who possessed urban property or whose agricultural produce found a market in a particular town or city. Without intending to draw too close a parallel, it can be said of the urban patriciate of Qājār Iran what Richard W. Bulliet has said of the urban patriciate of pre-Mongol Nīshāpūr, that it was composed, typically, of "a group of families, often intermarried, with landowning, merchant, or religious backgrounds, and not infrequently all three, who monopolized political and religious power in the city . . . all share a local base and a local allegiance". In the time of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh, as much as in that of Alp Arslān or Malik Shāh, "The reality of the patriciate consisted in individuals and families who knew each other as being above the ordinary run of people. There was no formal membership in the patriciate . . . There is nothing extraordinary in all of this; upper classes frequently lack formal definition."[66]

Together with the ᶜulamā, the merchant class was the most prosperous and stable element in early Qājār Iran, being largely immune from the conspicuous consumption and extravagance which, typically, characterized the military and official classes. It was also less vulnerable to the hazards of public life.[67] Foreign visitors thought that Iranian merchants lived well, that their houses were comfortable and sometimes opulent, and that the wives of the richest were reputedly as well dressed as the women of the royal household.[68] For all that, however, their style of life remained unostentatious, so as not to attract the attention of envious or greedy neighbours.[69] Despite occasional acts of individual extortion, the authorities generally protected and even cherished geese

[66] Bulliet, *The Patricians of Nishapur*, pp. 26–7 and 86.

[67] Morier, *Journey*, p. 237, and Brydges, *Mission*, p. 80.

[68] Brydges, *Kajars*, pp. cxxxiii–cxxxiv, and Brydges, *Mission*, p. 104.

[69] Brydges, *Kajars*, pp. cxxxiii–cxxxiv, where the house of Ḥājjī Yūsuf, the principal jeweller employed by the Zand family, in Shīrāz is described.

which could lay such truly golden eggs. The merchant who possessed considerable capital and real local influence, who traded between cities and sometimes even engaged in risky, if rewarding, commercial ventures beyond the frontiers, and who practised a calling deeply respected in traditional Islamic society, was a most valuable subject of Shahs, princes and governors.[70] When called upon, he could provide loans (whether voluntary or otherwise) to cover unanticipated or non-recurring expenses such as unseasonal campaigning, the cost of foreign missions, or special celebrations. In Shīrāz, in 1787, Francklin observed the entire trading community pressed into contributing a large *pīshkash* to meet the costs of the extravagant festivities which accompanied the circumcision of a son of Jaᶜfar Khān Zand.[71] Such "benevolences" were customary and acquiesced in. No less useful was the merchant in procuring the foreign-manufactured luxuries which were in such demand among the ruling élite. In return, he was sometimes able to put unostentatious pressure upon local officials, and even make himself heard at court. In 1808–9, for example, merchants with interests in the Persian Gulf and India trade were believed to be exercising considerable influence in both Shīrāz and Tehran in regard to the dispute between the rival envoys of the East India Company and the British government.[72] Moreover, compared to the rest of the population, the merchant, at least during the reign of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh, enjoyed the privilege of being virtually tax-exempt, his sole contribution to the exchequer being customs dues, estimated at being one-tenth of the value on imported goods.[73]

Beneath the merchants of ample means, the lower strata of urban society were composed of successive layers of petty traders and itinerant pedlars, craftsmen and artisans, caravan-guides and guards, entertainers and mountebanks, down to those whose muscle-power was almost their sole marketable asset, such as packers and porters, handlers of transport-animals, manual workers, servants and beggars. The certainty and regularity of work for such people was far from assured. Much labour was seasonal, and underemployment may have been as serious a source of urban poverty as unemployment. For those who bought and sold with little in the way of working capital, and for those with craft-skills who lived a little above the subsistence-level, a precarious dependence upon the laws of supply and demand, and upon the operation of distant markets was a fact of life. Superficially, the middling and lower ranks of urban Iran seemed to serve as the ballast of a conservative and apparently stable society, but in fact, almost all below the ranks of the patriciate were liable to unpredictable changes of fortune

[70] Brydges, *Mission*, p. 428. [71] Francklin, *Observations*, pp. 124–6.
[72] Brydges, *Mission*, pp. 31 and 131. [73] Morier, *Journey*, p. 237.

as a result of drought, famine and epidemics, ephemeral or protracted political crises, fluctuating prices and changing market-conditions. Life's certainties were more apparent than real, with the result that the urban population constituted a volatile, potentially explosive element in society, capable of violent eruption when pressed too hard.

As to spatial organization, the core of every town and city was the bazaar, its commercial and social significance reflected in the scale, complexity and central location of the bazaars of such cities as Iṣfahān, Kāshān, Shīrāz and Tehran. Often, these were, as in the case of Karīm Khān Zand's bazaar in Shīrāz or Muḥammad ᶜAlī Mīrzā's in Kirmānshāh, monuments not only to the public-spiritedness of rulers, but also to their self-interest. The latter consideration did not escape Francklin's attention as he surveyed the Shīrāz bazaar in the late 18th century:

Shirauz has many good bazars and caravanserais: that distinguished by the appelation of the Vakeel's bazar (so called from its being built by Kerim Khan), is by far the handsomest; it is a long street, extending about a quarter of a mile, built entirely of brick, and roofed something in the style of the Piazzas in Covent Garden; it is lofty and well made; on each side are the shops of the tradesmen, merchants, and others, in which are exposed for sale a variety of goods of all kinds: these shops are the property of the Khan, and are rented to the merchants at a very easy monthly rate.[74]

Franklin's enthusiasm for the bazaars of Shīrāz was shared by Scott Waring:

The Vakeel's Bazar is a most noble work; it is built of brick, arched, and covered in like Exeter Change. It probably extends half a mile, and is, I should suppose, fifty feet wide . . . It has a grand appearance at night, when it is lighted up; and as every trade has a separate quarter, you know where to resort to for what you may require . . . Many of the other markets are very handsome, but none so magnificent as the Vakeel's.[75]

Not all bazaars were as grand or as commodious as those of Shīrāz, but their functions and general arrangements were the same. Those of Rasht, for example, although quite different in appearance from the brick-built complexes on the plateau, fulfilled an identical role. Fraser writes:

The bazars are the objects certainly best worthy of attention in Resht; they are extensive, regular, clean, and well kept. They consist of a series of three or four narrow streets, running parallel to each other, crossed at right angles by others, and including several caravanseries; so that the whole forms a very extensive assemblage of shops and warehouses. These bazars are well paved, but not entirely covered in from the weather, as in most other places. Instead of arched or domed roofs extending from one side of the street to the other, there are long pent-house roofs, projecting from either side nearly to

[74] Francklin, *op. cit.*, p. 58. [75] Scott Waring, *Tour*, p. 32.

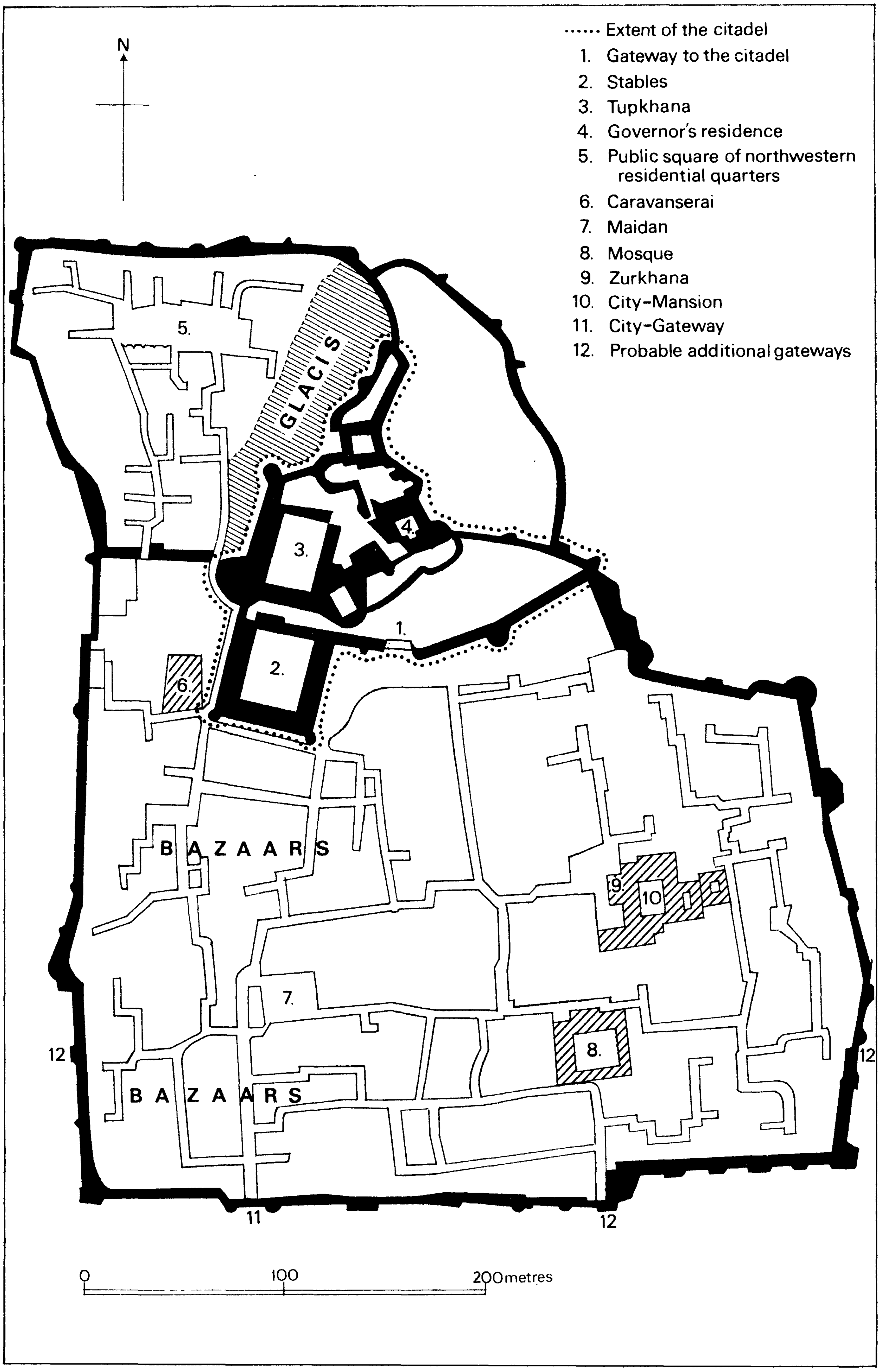


Fig. 3 The old city of Bam, now abandoned, but retaining the layout of the traditional Iranian urban centre.

the centre, covering the shops and raised terraces before them, as well as all foot-passengers, both from rain and from the sun, but leaving those who ride on horseback, who are forced to keep the gutter in the middle, exposed to the full effects of the weather, and the torrents of water which in rain run off the roofs.[76]

Adjacent to the bazaars were caravanserais, and in addition to providing shelter for travellers and their beasts, and security for goods in transit, these acted as enclosed markets where bulky or valuable commodities were handled and stored, and where leading merchants hired rooms in which to transact business. As a consequence, caravanserais located in or close to the bazaars acquired the character of a common meeting-place for merchants and a kind of informal exchange.[77] Some caravanserais were frequented by merchants with a particular line of goods. Thus, cloth-merchants, needing security for bulky bales of textiles, might assemble at a particular caravanserai where, at night, their stock would be protected by high walls and locked gates. In the larger cities, certain caravanserais were the resort of foreign merchants (in Shīrāz, for example, the Indian traders had their own caranvanserai) or of Armenians. Like the bazaars, some caravanserais in the cities were built and then let out to tenants by royal or gubernatorial entrepreneurs. Also like the bazaars, their utility ensured that they were kept in a tolerably good state of repair. Francklin was clearly impressed by these institutions when he wrote:

Leading out of this bazar [Karīm Khān Zand's] is a spacious caravanserai, of an octagon form, built of brick; the entrance through a handsome arched gate-way: in the centre is a place for the baggage and merchandise, and on the sides above and below commodious apartments for the merchants and travellers; these are also rented at a moderate monthly sum. About the centre of the above-mentioned bazar is another spacious caravanserai, of a square form, the front of which is ornamented with a blue and white enamelled work, in order to represent China ware, and has a pleasing effect to the eye. This building is larger than the former, and is chiefly resorted to by Armenian and other Christian merchants. . . .[78]

In contrast, the caravanserais which had been built at various times along the main trade-routes, linking each town or city with its immediate neighbour, were often in a dilapidated condition, and sometimes little more than ruins. A few, located close to the capital or on the more frequented roads, were properly maintained but there was no certainty as to the kind of accommodation a traveller would find at the end of a day. Forster, travelling by caravan from Herat to Sārī in mid-winter in the late 18th century experienced widely different

[76] Fraser, *Caspian Sea*, p. 149. [77] Francklin, *op. cit.*, p. 59; Brydges, *Mission*, p. 428.
[78] Francklin, *op. cit.*, pp. 58–9.

conditions from one night's stop to the next, but his overall experience was typical.

In Herat, Forster lodged in relative comfort in a caravanserai reserved for travellers (i.e., it had not become the business rendezvous of local merchants), but after leaving Herat the caravan did not find any shelter for several nights, and at some stopping-places there was barely sufficient water at the solitary well to meet the travellers' needs. At Khwāf, Forster encountered a frequent difficulty for travellers in Qājār Iran. The place was, he noted, "a populous, and in this country a large village, which maintains a moderate traffick with Herat, Muschid, and Turshish", but provisions were virtually unobtainable. "Markets and public shops being only seen in the cities and principal towns of Persia and Afghanistan, travellers are obliged to apply for provisions to the housekeepers, who are often unable to provide the required quantity. Though Khauff is a village of note, bread in no part of it is publickly vended."[79]

Leaving Khwāf, the party spent the next night on the ground floor of a windmill. Two nights later, a heavy fall of snow forced them to halt in a small fortified village where there was no public accommodation. "Our party went into the fort to seek shelter, and after earnest intreaties, were conducted into a small dark room", but there was no food. "The inhabitants aware of our distress, furnished an abundant supply of fuel, which became as necessary to our existence as food; but when the cold was a little qualified, we experienced an urgent want of provisions; not an article of which was to be procured at Ashkara."[80] At Turshīz the local caravanserai was full, but after offering a *douceur* to the gatekeeper, Forster obtained a half-share of a room and thereafter "extolled the comforts of a commodious apartment, and savoury messes, made in rotation of beef, mutton, and camels flesh".[81] The first stop after Turshīz was "at a small karavansera, where being plentifully supplied with fuel by one of the villagers . . . we passed a cold snowy night very comfortably."[82] The next night, the chieftain of a small village through which they passed, knowing the leader of the caravan, invited them into the fort for the night.

In this uncertain way, the journey continued until Shāhrūd, although even there no provisions were to be had and the fuel was damp, and a further night on the road was spent in a ruined *ḥammām*. Only in Māzandarān did the travellers encounter some degree of comfort. Forster travelled on roads which were not the most frequented, but his adventures crossing Afghanistan and Iran in

[79] Forster, *op. cit.* II, p. 142. [80] *Ibid*, II, p. 144. [81] *Ibid*, II, pp. 155 and 162–3.
[82] *Ibid*, II, pp. 168–9.

disguise, would have been quite familiar to those Iranians – traders, pilgrims, dervishes, etc. – who were frequently on the move. The authorities showed little concern for the safety or comfort of travellers, and there is scant evidence of government initiative in building or repairing caravanserais. The better-preserved dated from Safavid times, and those built since were generally the gift of local benefactors.

By the standards of contemporary Europe, the roads of 19th century Iran were far from satisfactory, but they adequately met the needs of a society where mules and camels were the normal forms of transport. Wheeled vehicles were hardly used, but in any case, the mountainous country through which so many roadways passed ruled out the use of carts or wagons. In fact, the so-called roads were nothing more than hoof-marked tracks used by caravans since time immemorial. Many were impassable in winter. Under the early Qājārs the government took little or no interest in improving communications, assuming perhaps that a non-existent road-system constituted a defence against foreign invasion.[83] When, during the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, repairs and improvements were made to the dangerous track up the Kutāl-i Dukhtar, between Kāzarūn and Shīrāz, they were paid for by a local merchant on his own initiative, not by the provincial government of Fārs.[84]

Most transport was by mule. Mule-trains varied in size from small strings, such as the thirty-nine beasts which accompanied Harford Jones and a friendly merchant, Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm Iṣfahānī, from Shīrāz to Bushire in 1791, to the hundreds which escorted persons of consequence. Good mules were valuable property. Especially famous for the excellence of its mules was the village of Zarqān, north of Shīrāz, where there were two thousand available for hire.[85] Merchants and other travellers usually hired mules and muleteers to carry on their business or move about the country, rarely owning their own transport-animals. Hence, the muleteer was one of the mainstays of the commercial life of the country, and although foreigners complained of his cunning and idleness, he was regarded as something of a superior person, more independent and self-reliant than most, and he was frequently entrusted with the transport of considerable sums in coin or precious metals from one city to another.[86] Sometimes, he acquired a modest sufficiency. Harford Jones met muleteers richer than the merchants who engaged them, and he mentions one who owned 250 mules and 20 pack-horses.[87]

[83] Malcolm, *History* II, p. 525. [84] Ouseley, *op. cit.* I, pp. 302–3.
[85] *Ibid*, II, pp. 226–7. [86] *Ibid*, II, p. 375. [87] Brydges, *Mission*, p. 104.

Officials were stationed at intervals on the principal roads to levy tolls (*rāhdārī*) and to protect travellers.[88] In the time of Āghā Muḥammad Khān these tasks seem to have been effectively carried out, but during the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh the *rāhdārs* frequently extorted money from road-users by force or fraud, and were sometimes in league with local bandits.[89] The latter were by no means uncommon, although the frequency and range of their activities depended upon the vigilance and vigour of the forces at the disposal of the local government. They were, however, an inevitable hazard in an underpoliced countryside. Occasionally, caravans would suffer the depredations of tribal raiders, motivated by want or by a desire to challenge the authority of the central government. In Iṣfahān in 1811, for example, it was rumoured that the city itself was about to become the objective of a Bakhtiyārī foray, which in fact never materialized.[90] In Khurāsān, however, there was the much more serious danger of Türkmen slave-raiders. Consequently, travellers to the northeast were warned to go heavily armed.

Throughout the 18th and much of the 19th century, the inhabitants of Khurāsān and Gurgān were exposed to relentless persecution by slavers from beyond the border, against whom little or no protection was to be had. The perpetrators of these atrocious activities were members of the Türkmen tribes living along Iran's extended, undelineated and largely defenceless northeast frontier. The tribes most frequently involved were the Göklen, the Tekke and the Yamūt. The raiders themselves retained very few of the Iranian slaves whom they captured, the ultimate destination of their human chattel being the flourishing slave-markets of Khiva, Bukhārā and other towns in the Uzbek country north of the Qara-Qum. The justification offered by the Sunnī ʿulamā of Bukhārā for this enslavement of fellow-Muslims was the Shīʿī heterodoxy of the Iranians.

The number of Iranian victims of Türkmen slave-raiding, although unrecorded, must have been very great, and included persons of all ages and occupations, and of both sexes. In fact, so extensive was this involuntary transfer of people across the Qara-Qum and the Āmū-Daryā that the descendants of Iranian slaves and of unions between Uzbek males and Iranian females constituted a distinct minority among the diverse ethnic elements of the population of the Central Asian khanates. Male slaves were engaged in agriculture and to a

[88] Ouseley, *op. cit.* I, p. 271; Brydges, *Mission*, p. 146.

[89] Morier, *Second Journey*, pp. 69–70; Brydges, *Kajars*, p. clix. There was disagreement as to the prevalence of highway robbery. Compare Francklin, *op. cit.*, p. 132, with Scott Waring, *op. cit.*, pp. 26–7.

[90] Ouseley, *op. cit.* II, p. 449, and III, pp. 53–4.

lesser extent in craft occupations and domestic service. Most women slaves became household servants. The more attractive were purchased for purposes of sexual gratification, and naturally commanded higher than average prices.

The most obvious targets for attack by Türkmen raiding-parties were isolated villages and unprotected caravans. When the raiding-parties were sufficiently large (some numbered several hundred) small towns, and even the environs of Mashhad and Astarābād, were not immune to attack. Caravans, however, were especially tempting prey, since they provided opportunities for plundering as well as slaving, while merchants and other travellers of means could be ransomed for large sums. No traveller was safe from attack, unless he was able to provide himself with a well-armed escort. On one occasion, even a brother of the King of Awadh was seized.

Europeans who travelled in northeastern Iran described the population as living in a state of perpetual fear and uncertainty, convinced that the government authorities would not or could not provide protection or even the assurance of punitive retaliation. Left to their own defence, the local people took whatever precautions they could. Most villages were fortified, and in the more exposed districts of Gurgān and Khurāsān, the cultivators worked the land with their weapons within arms' reach, or with a line of sentries standing on guard at the edge of the fields. Manned watchtowers and regular patrolling of strategic mountain passes could reduce the dangers of sudden attack, but so widespread was the terror inspired by the Türkmens that even close to the walls of Mashhad good agricultural land was left uncultivated. In Khurāsān as a whole, and in the frontier districts in particular, the population was said to be on the decline, except in the territories controlled by the khans of Bujnūrd, Qūchān, Darra Gaz and Kalāt, who gave the Türkmens as good as they got. In fact, assured protection required effective lordship, so that everywhere villagers were dependent for their security upon local landowners or military leaders who had seized control in the absence of any effective provincial government. Such, at least, could offer the protection of one of the many petty forts dotted over the Khurāsān countryside as a refuge for men and animals.

The urban communities of the province were no less aware of the Türkmen threat, which undoubtedly contributed towards a decline in commercial activity. Walls and gateways had to be kept in constant repair, and departing caravans needed to know the likelihood of attack in open country before they reached the safety of the next town. It seems incredible that the Qājārs were unable to put an end to a situation which led to a reduction of the population, agricultural production and state revenues of a large part of the kingdom, as well

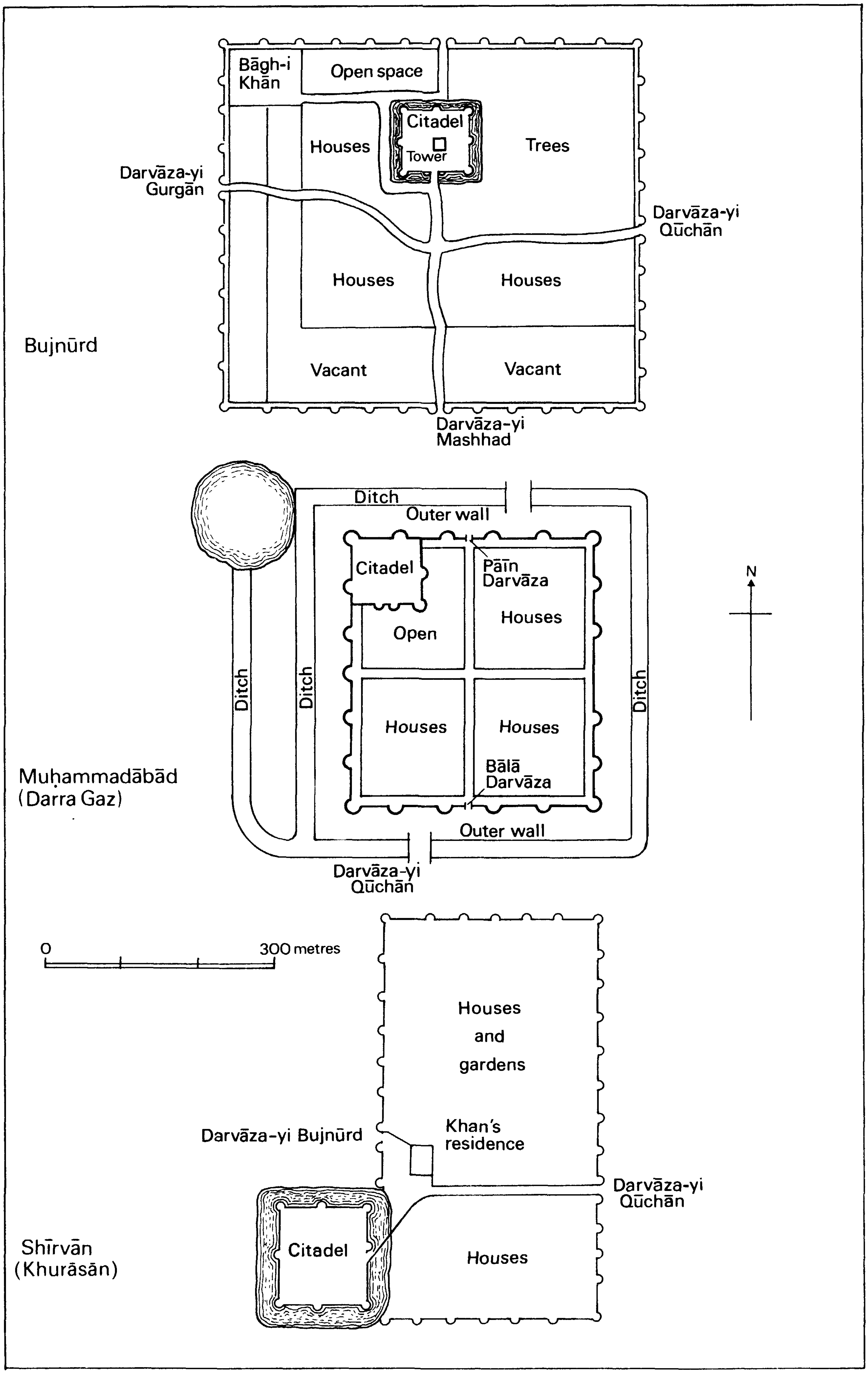


Fig. 4 Three district headquarters in northern Khurāsān. Such modest centres probably constituted the extent of the urban experience of the majority of Iranians during the 19th century.

as patently demonstrating the régime's inability to defend its own subjects. Nevertheless, there were a number of interlocking factors which explain the continuation of this state of affairs down to the end of the century. First, there was the apparently inexhaustible demand for slaves in the Uzbek khanates. Secondly, there was the prevailing poverty of the Türkmens, balanced by opportunities for reaping great profits from slave-raiding in circumstances in which the risks of retribution were almost negligible, given the feebleness of the provincial administration in intercepting or punishing raiders. Then, there was the failure of the Iranian government to police the frontier or maintain a permanent military presence in the districts most exposed to Türkmen attacks. Finally, there was the inescapable fact that, on the Iranian side of the frontier, and as a direct result of the pusillanimous attitude of government, local officials, traders and others, either out of fear or tempted with a share of the profits, assisted the Türkmens with information on the state of the country and with warnings of contemplated counter-attacks. Only Russia's annexation of the khanates in the second half of the 19th century, leading to the eventual conquest of the Türkmens and to the Russian delineation of the frontier with Iran, brought this evil traffic to an end.

Eighteenth and nineteenth-century Iran offers the curious paradox that while the Iranian inhabitants of Khurāsān and Gurgān were the victims of incessant slave-raiding by the Türkmens, and while large numbers of Iranian subjects lived out their lives as slaves of the Uzbeks, Iran itself remained a slave-owning and slave-importing society. Slaves reached Iran from several directions: from across the Aras river, from across the frontier with the vilāyat of Baghdad, and by way of the Persian Gulf. Christian Armenians and Georgians from the Caucasus region were brought back in border forays. After the sack of Tiflis in 1795, Āghā Muḥammad Khān is said to have carried off 15,000 Georgians into slavery, mainly women and children. The women became household slaves, while the more attractive were placed in the harems of the nobility. Young males were frequently castrated. The court or household eunuch of 19th-century Iran, often his master's trusted confidant, was, typically, a Georgian. However, the flow of Christian slaves from Caucasia decreased to a trickle after the Treaty of Turkmānchai of 1828, although the abducting of women across the frontier continued throughout the century.

Apart from Caucasian Christians, most slaves in Iran were of African origin. They were employed mainly as agricultural workers in the south, and especially in the date-plantations of the *garmsīr*, but they were to be encountered in all the larger cities, where they lived as household dependents. African slaves were

brought to Iran by two routes: by ship from East Africa or from the shores of the Red Sea, often in vessels of Muscat or Zanzibar; or overland via Baghdad, having been purchased by merchants or pilgrims in the Ḥijāz or in the vilāyat itself. Foreigners in Iran identified three main groups: Swahili-speakers from East Africa, Ethiopians (or Habashis, as they had long been called in the Middle East), and Nubians, a term used to describe all slaves originating from the Sudan. The last were shipped mainly from Egyptian or Red Sea ports such as Sawakin and Massawa.

Nineteenth-century European observers showed more than a passing interest in black slaves in Iran. The abolition of the slave-trade everywhere had long exercised British public opinion, and the Royal Navy was regarded as the foremost agency for bringing the traffic to an end. In the United States, as well, slavery was becoming a burning issue. Thus, in writing of Iran in 1849–50, Lady Sheil commented in detail upon the nature of Iranian slavery. She thought that, on balance, the Iranians were fairly tolerant and easy-going masters, while of the slaves themselves, she wrote:

They are highly esteemed as being mild, faithful, brave and intelligent, and are generally confidential servants in Persian households. Ill-treatment must of course sometimes take place when there is unlimited power on one hand, and entire submission on the other. The fact is proved by the occasional instances in which slaves have taken refuge in the Mission to escape from punishment by their masters. Still it is believed that in general, cruelty, or even harshness, is rarely practised towards slaves in Persia. Their customary treatment is similar to that of the other servants of a family, or even something better, particularly when they happen to be Nubees or Habeshees. They are never employed as field labourers, their occupations being confined to the duties of the household. It is probable that in the anderoons more suffering is inflicted on the women slaves than is endured by the men.

All things considered, she felt that the lot of slaves in Iran was probably to be preferred to that of slaves elsewhere:

They are not treated with contempt as in America; there are no special laws to hold them in a state of degradation; they are frequently restored to freedom, and when this happens, they take their station in society without any reference to their colour or descent. White slaves frequently rise to the highest employments, but these are commonly captives taken in war. It is said not to be easy to make an estimate of the number of slaves imported annually into Persia from the Red Sea and Zanjibar (sic). They certainly are not numerous, judging by the few to be seen in the streets of the large towns in the north of Persia. In those of the south they are doubtless in greater numbers, and particularly in the low, level tract bordering the coast, of which Bushire and Benderabbas are near the extremities. The difficulty of forming a correct calculation on the subject, arises from the practice of each petty chief in the Persian Gulf being an importer in his own vessels, and from the slaves

being landed at a variety of small harbours extending over a great length of coast. The number is supposed not to exceed two or three thousand annually, of whom a great many die after leaving the hot region of the Persian coast.[91]

There can be no doubt of the existence of considerable numbers of African slaves or their descendants in southern Iran: in Khūzistān and Fārs, in Ahvāz, Bihbahān, Bushire, Kāzarūn and Shīrāz; and in the southeast, in Lār, Bam, Bandar ʿAbbās, Jīruft, Kirmān and Mīnāb. K.E. Abbott, writing in 1851, thought that the inhabitants of the Kūh-i Jabal Bāriz between Bam and Jīruft were the descendants of unions between indigenous tribals and imported blacks, and he supposed the same to be true of many of the cultivators in Sīstān.[92] Local nomenclature in the southeast also pointed to settlements of former African slaves: in Balūchistān, there was a village of Zanjīābād, and a Qalʿa-i Zanjīān, both close to a Mount of the Blacks.[93] On the Gulf littoral and in the immediate hinterland, the role of African slaves in harvesting dates and other crops may have been more extensive than has hitherto been realized.

However many blacks were imported into Iran during the first half of the 19th century, the trade thereafter gradually withered away, just as the trade in Caucasian Christians had done a quarter of a century earlier. British concern with slave-trading in the Persian Gulf touched Iran no less than the Ottoman authorities in Iraq and the Arab *shaikh*s of the west coast. In August 1846, Muḥammad Shāh was formally requested to prohibit the slave trade in the Gulf ports, but he refused, asserting that slavery was permitted in Islam, and that enslavement hastened conversion. Eventually, under pressure, he relented and in 1848 issued a *farmān* forbidding the importation of slaves into Iran by sea. At the same time, he sent instructions to the beglerbegī of Fārs, acknowledging the Royal Navy's right to search and seizure. This was confirmed subsequently in a farmān of 1852, although the smuggling of small numbers of slaves into the less-frequented harbours continued for some time.[94] Likewise, as early as 1846 the Vālī of Baghdad issued an order prohibiting the slave trade in the Ottoman ports of the Gulf, although some years were to elapse before the illicit transit of slaves from the vilāyat to Iran, through Kirmānshāh, could be brought to an end.[95]

Most Iranians during the 19th century enjoyed a very precarious tenure of life and property. Virtually all were vulnerable to exploitation or oppression by someone above them. Access to justice was apt to be costly, and the outcome uncertain. Yet within these encompassing generalizations, some were more

[91] Sheil, *Glimpses*, pp. 243–5.
[92] Amanat, *op. cit.*, pp. 164 and 172.
[93] Harris, *African Presence*, p. 77.
[94] Toledano, *Ottoman Slave Trade*, pp. 105–6.
[95] *Ibid*, p. 101.

vulnerable than others. At a guess, half the population of Iran was female. In 19th-century writing on Iran, whether native or foreign, women receive virtually no mention. Even the most naïve European diplomat, army officer or globetrotter knew better than to question a Muslim male regarding his womenfolk, let alone attempt direct communication with them, while European female travellers were very rare, consisting of the occasional diplomat's wife and, towards the end of the century, the lady-missionary.[96] In consequence, the kinds of questions which historians now ask about the lives of women in times past (the age of puberty and marriage, the span of the child-bearing years, the size and mortality rates of families, the rôle of mothers and others in child-rearing, women in the work-force, and the practical implications of their social and legal status) cannot be answered for Qājār Iran.[97] What can safely be affirmed is that every woman, without exception, was subordinate to the authority of and under the restraint of a particular man (i.e., father, brother, husband, son), and that her material well-being and personal happiness were entirely dependent upon the benevolence, sense of justice, worldly success and good fortune of whatever male happened to be exercising that authority over her at any given time.

Having no first-hand contact with Iranian women, European commentators were reduced to supposition, gossip, and stereotypical commentary. Thus, they liked to reiterate that, despite the apparent subordination of women to men enjoined by Islam, there were numerous traditions to show that the Prophet required that women be treated with justice and generosity. Some travellers, familiar with other Muslim countries, thought that in social matters Iranians were more easy-going than their neighbours, and that this contributed to the alleviation of an otherwise hard lot. Evidence for this, it was asserted, was the relative freedom with which, in the cities, women left their houses and went visiting, although always modestly concealed in a *chādur*. A few thought that the

[96] E.g., Sheil, *op. cit.*, and Ella C. Sykes, *Through Persia on a Side-Saddle* and *Persia and Its People*. For women missionaries in Iran, see Bishop, *Journeys*; Hume-Griffith, *Behind the Veil*; Bird, *Mary Bird in Persia*; and Ross, *A Doctor in Bakhtiari Land*. See also F.A.C. Forbes-Leith, *Checkmate*, pp. 180–93.

[97] Lacking statistics of any kind, the historian is compelled to make the most of random contemporary comments, such as the view of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's French physician, Ernest Cloquet (1818–55), that not more than three Iranian children in ten lived beyond their third year. Sheil, *op. cit.*, p. 149. If Cloquet kept a diary of his years in Iran it would make fascinating reading. The son of one distinguished French physician, Hippolyte Cloquet, and the nephew of a second, Jules-Germain Cloquet, Ernest was invited in 1846, having just completed his training, to become the physician of Muḥammad Shāh. With his professional skill, he soon won the Shah's confidence, and was awarded the Order of the Lion and Sun. In Tehran, he studied cholera and other infectious diseases and communicated his findings to the Académie de médecine in Paris, for which he received the Légion d'honneur. After Muḥammad Shāh's death, he continued as physician to Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh until his death in 1855. He must have possessed a rare familiarity with the medical and sanitary practices of Qājār Iran.

chādur, because it concealed a woman's identity, contributed to her freedom of movement. Others, again, held that the lot of women in the villages or amongst the tribes was less circumscribed and less debilitating than that of their sisters in the towns.

Europeans fancied that they knew most about the lifestyle of upper-class women, and especially of the women of the palace, whom diplomats' wives occasionally met under rather formal and constrained circumstances. In particular, the notion of the harem fascinated Europeans, for whom it was a source of constant speculation and fantasy. In the early 19th century, polygamy was widely practised by the ruling élite, as was the keeping of concubines, among whom light-skinned Caucasian women were in greatest demand. Border-raiding and slave-trading ensured a regular supply of the latter, at least until Russia annexed the frontier khanates of the northwest. In Tabrīz, for instance, in 1810 a good-looking Georgian girl could sell for eighty pounds on the open market.[98] The existence of an extensive traffic in female slaves, as well as the helpless position of any woman bereft of the protection of family or kinsfolk, goes far to explaining the ubiquitous presence of dancing-girls, courtesans and common prostitutes. Officially, such occupations were frowned upon, and in some places, outlawed, although venal agents of the law would turn a blind eye for a price. Forster was echoing the public posture of the authorities when he wrote that "neither Afghanistan nor the northern provinces of Persia, permit the residence of courtezans, or any women that dance and sing for the public entertainment",[99] but Scott Waring probably came closer to reality. "The most beautiful women in Persia are devoted to the profession of dancing; the transparency of their shift, which is the only covering they use to conceal their persons, the exquisite symmetry of their forms, their apparent agitation, and the licentiousness of their verses, are so many incentives to a passion, which requires more philosophy than the Persians possess to restrain."[100] Furthermore, he was adamant that dancing-girls and prostitutes were officially recognized by the authorities, and taxed accordingly: "the description of people who pay the heaviest tax to government, are the female dancer, and the votaries of pleasure. They exercise their professions under the immediate patronage of the governor; their names, ages, &c. are carefully registered, and if one should die or marry, another instantly supplies her place. They are divided into classes, agreeably to their merits, and the estimation they are held in; each class inhabits separate streets, so that you may descend from the *doo Toomunees* [two tūmāns] to the *Pooli*

[98] Kinneir, *op. cit.*, p. 27. [99] Forster, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 119.
[100] Scott Waring, *Tour*, p. 55.

Seeahs ["black money" – copper coins], without the chance of making mistakes."[101] In fact, consorting with public women, like consuming alcohol, while forbidden by the Sharīʿa, was far from unknown. Layard in Iṣfahān in 1840–1, to quote a single example, participated in what he described as an "orgy" at a Lur chieftain's house, during which his host and the guests drank huge quantities of *ʿaraq* in the company of obviously lubricious dancing-girls.[102]

The complacent comments of European writers regarding the status of Iranian women, ranging from a conviction that relations between the sexes were conducted strictly in accordance with Quranic injunctions, to humorous assertions that the Iranian housewife in her *andarūn* ruled her menfolk with a rod of iron, totally ignored the fact that women were peculiarly exposed to ill-treatment and violence in a society where the normative manner of exercising authority was capricious and brutal. Women were frequently the principal victims when misfortune struck a family or a community. Much has been made of a traditional Islamic code of chivalry in the treatment of women and children, but such was certainly not the case in Qājār Iran. If a minister or high official was disgraced or executed, his family suffered too. Sometimes, his wives and daughters were handed over to his enemies, or to the grooms of the royal stables. If such was the treatment meted out to the families of nobles, it needs little imagination to visualize the fate of less prominent offenders. If a military detachment was raiding in a border region, if a rebel district was being pacified, or if a village was being punished for some misdemeanour, the men frequently escaped, but it was their women who were handed over to the soldiers, or sold as slaves. An episode of this kind occurred in Āẕarbāījān in the 1830s, when a village in Salmās district, which had already paid its taxes to ʿAbbās Mīrzā, declined to pay them again to his younger son, Jahāngīr Mīrzā, who was in need of cash. After plundering the village, the prince had the entire population carried off to Khūy, where the men were immediately executed. "The females, after being given over to the soldiery and furoshes, were likewise put to death, or had their lives spared secretly by being made slaves of; accounts differ as to the treatment of the children . . . the number of sufferers has been stated at three hundred."[103]

Obviously, the role of women in 19th-century Iran is only one of many *lacunae* in our understanding of the way in which that society functioned. Research into Iranian social history has hardly begun, and the task ahead is a formidable one.

[101] *Ibid*, p. 80. Kinneir assumed that the government of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh derived revenue from licensing and taxing prostitutes. Kinneir, *op. cit.*, p. 27. [102] Layard, *op. cit.*, I, p. 332.

[103] Fraser, *Winter's Journey* I, p. 367.

The reconstruction of the world which the Iranians lost in their encounter with the West deserves further and more detailed study, for without an understanding of that world, the subsequent course of Iranian history must remain only imperfectly comprehended.

CHAPTER 16

EUROPEAN ECONOMIC PENETRATION, 1872–1921

In the course of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th, the foreign economic impact on Iran was far weaker than on its neighbours: India, Transcaucasia, Turkey, Syria, Egypt and, after 1865, Central Asia. A few figures illustrate the difference. In 1913, Iran's foreign trade (exports and imports) per capita was $10, Turkey's $15, Egypt's $24 and India's $4. Foreign capital investment totalled about $150 million, compared to over $1,000 million each in Egypt and Turkey and nearly $2,000 million in India. There were, to all intents and purposes, no railways in Iran, as against some 3,500 kilometres in Turkey, 4,300 in Egypt and 56,000 in India, and practically no modern factories. It may be added that the foreign social and cultural impact – as indicated, for example, by the number of alien residents, foreign schools, books and newspapers published or films shown – was also much weaker in Iran.

Several factors explain this situation. First, there was Iran's geographic isolation: until the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 it was over 10,000 miles away from Western Europe and 1,500–2,000 miles from the main centres of Russian economic activity; and in the era of sea trade, Iran, unlike its Middle Eastern neighbours, lay off the world's great commercial routes. Secondly there was its physical structure: its inhospitable coast lines, rugged terrain, and the fact that its most fertile and richest provinces are cut off from the open seas by mountain ranges and deserts which, coupled with lack of navigable rivers, inhibited facility of communications. Thirdly, there was the political and economic collapse of the 18th century, which had left Iran an exhausted and impoverished country with little economic surplus and led to a marked decline in its foreign trade. Moreover, the weakness of the central government, and its very tentative control of large parts of its territory and population made Iran a less attractive field for foreign penetration than India, Transcaucasia and Central Asia, for example, or such relatively secure countries as Egypt and Turkey. There was also a social factor: unlike the other Middle Eastern countries, Iran did not have large non-Muslim minorities whose early contacts with Europe had enabled them to obtain Western education and knowledge of business methods, and who consequently formed valuable links with foreign capital and enterprise.

Lastly, there was the powerful retarding factor of Anglo-Russian rivalry, which stultified many attempts at development. For all these reasons, foreign economic penetration started later in Iran, and proceeded more slowly, than in the surrounding areas. It may be studied under the following headings: transport; trade; finance and capital investment; manufacturing and petroleum.

TRANSPORT[1]

Modern transport first reached Iran in 1836, when Colonel Chesney's steamboat, which had sailed down the Euphrates, arrived at Bushire. But this development was not extended until 1862, when the Burmah (later British India) Steam Navigation company established a six-weekly steamer service, eventually converted into a weekly one, between Karachi and the various Iranian and Arab ports of the Persian Gulf. In the same year, a regular service was established on the Tigris, between Baghdad and Baṣra. The opening of the Suez Canal gave a great stimulus to navigation in the Gulf, putting it within reach of steamers sailing from Europe. By 1870, the British line had been joined by an Iranian (sailing under the British flag) and a Turkish line, as well as by tramp steamers. The next forty years saw the failure of the attempt to establish a French line, and the inauguration of Russian (in 1901) and German (1906) lines to the Gulf, to continue service until the First World War. The latter, the Hamburg-Amerika line, competed successfully with the British companies, which, as late as 1909–10, accounted for 90% of the Gulf's shipping, and forced freights down. In 1914, three-quarters of the total tonnage was British and one-eighth German.

The foreign lines presumably drove many Iranian and Arab sailing ships out of business, but their expansion was made possible mainly by the huge increase in traffic. In 1871, the tonnage of steam ships entering Bushire was well under 5,000; by 1889 it had risen to 115,000 and in 1911, 200 steamers aggregating 319,000 tons entered the port. Most of these ships also called at other Gulf ports and, in 1913, more than 4,000 ships, with a total tonnage of over 2,000,000 stopped at Iranian ports.

At the same time, there were parallel developments in the Caspian Sea. Starting in the 18th century, growing numbers of Russian commercial ships began to sail on the Caspian; in the 1840s, steamships made their appearance and, by the 1850s, crossed over to Iran with increasing frequency. This expansion of Russian shipping on the Caspian was accompanied by the decline of Iranian

[1] The most useful works on this subject are the books by Entner, Issawi, Jamālzāda, Kazemzadeh, Litten, Martin, and Sykes, listed in the bibliography, and the sources cited therein.

shipping, which, by the mid-19th century, had been almost eliminated. In 1861, a regular service, subsidized by the Russian government, was started by the Kavkaz-Merkuz Company, which had been operating on the Volga since 1849, and other Russian lines came in to being during the next two decades. The total number of Russian steamers rose from 10, aggregating 2,600 tons, in 1867 to 139, aggregating 74,000 tons, in 1893 and 265, with a tonnage of 118,000, in 1907. The total traffic entering Iranian ports on the Caspian in 1907–8 consisted of 2,171 steamers, with a tonnage of 800,000, and 584 sailing-ships of 15,000 tons.[2]

This traffic was stimulated by improved transport in both Russia and Iran. The fact that the Russian rivers freeze in winter greatly impeded communications between the Caspian and central Russia, but the inauguration of a steam service on the Volga in 1843 somewhat eased the situation. More important was the extension of the Russian railways to Baku in 1884 and to Astrakhan in 1909. On the Iranian side, the poor condition of the ports caused great delays, accumulation and deterioration of merchandise and appreciable costs. To reduce this, between 1905 and 1913, Russia invested 1,300,000 roubles in improvements at Enzeli; a larger programme was interrupted by the First World War. After the disruption caused by the Bolshevik Revolution and the Civil War, services on the Caspian were resumed by the Soviet Kaspar Company.[3]

Lastly, mention should be made of steam navigation on the Black Sea. Regular services between Constantinople and Trebizond (Trabzon) were established in 1836, and greatly expanded thereafter. This helped the trade of northern Iran, by diverting the exports and imports of Tabrīz to Trebizond, instead of to Constantinople, Smyrna or Aleppo, and about the middle of the century that route carried nearly half of Iran's total imports and a slightly smaller fraction of its exports.

Iran's links with the outside world were further increased by telegraph lines. In 1860, a line was laid from Tehran to Tabrīz and soon extended to Julfa, where it connected with the Russian network. In 1863, work began on a British-sponsored line linked at one end to the Turkish telegraphs at Khānaqīn, in Iraq, and, at the other, by a submarine cable to Karachi. By the 1880s, Iran possessed 4,000 miles of telegraph lines.

Already by the preceding decade, with the loss to Iranians of most of the carrying trade, the bulk of Iran's external trade was probably being carried by the steamers of maritime powers. Internal transport trade was slower. Several

[2] See Issawi, *Economic History*, pp. 152–177, and sources reproduced or cited therein.
[3] *Ibid*, pp. 177–205.

rather ambitious railway schemes, including a line linking India to Iraq and the Mediterranean, were put forward by various foreign interests in the 1850s and 1860s, but none of them materialized. In 1872, however, a concession was granted to a British subject, Baron Julius de Reuter, which, in Lord Curzon's words, "was the most complete and extraordinary surrender of the entire industrial resources of a kingdom into foreign hands that has probably ever been dreamt of, much less accomplished, in history". Its main provision was a seventy-year concession for a railway from the Caspian to the Persian Gulf, with branch lines "either to join the provinces and towns in the interior of the Empire, or to join the Persian lines with foreign railways at any point on the frontiers in the direction of Europe or of India". In addition, the concession granted vast exclusive mineral and irrigation rights, and gave a prior claim in banking, roads, factories and other activities. The government was to receive 20% of the net profits on railways and 15% on other enterprises. Naturally, this sweeping alienation of resources aroused both Iranian and Russian opposition, and, since Reuter received no official British support, he was forced to withdraw, after having prepared one kilometre of railway bed. But the Russian diplomatic thrust generated by his intrusion pushed through another concession, the Falkenhagen concession of 1874, for a line from Julfa to Tabrīz; this also had additional provisions, including mineral rights. However, the Russian government failed to provide the necessary funds, and the concession lapsed. Various schemes put forward by French, British, American and Belgian promoters between 1878 and 1888 also failed.

By the latter date, both the British and Russian governments were thoroughly involved in the railway question, and both were divided by conflicting considerations. Britain was the leading railway builder of the 19th century, and British-built lines had stimulated its exports both directly and indirectly. Moreover, faced with growing Russian commercial competition, the British increasingly felt the need for modern transport in southern and central Iran, but at the same time feared that railways in the north, where, interestingly enough, Reuter's line had been started, would facilitate Russian economic penetration. Still more serious was the threat posed by Russian railways to Britain's position in the Persian Gulf, the Arabian Sea and Afghanistan, and to the defence of India. Hence, in 1888, the British induced the Shah to concede "the priority of the English Government over others in the construction of a southern railway to Tehran". They seem to have intended to use this agreement, and the still unlapsed Reuter concession, either to restrict the Russian railway to the northern part of the country – with the possibility of building a British line in the

south – or to insist on the line's being "an international one", "in which English capitalists should have a share".

Simultaneously, a group of Russian businessmen, with the tentative financial banking of the French Banque d'Escompte, put forward a scheme for a line from the Caspian to the Arabian Sea, and, in 1889, the Shah agreed with the Russian government to "grant to a Russian Company the construction in Persia of railways to anywhere where it may be advantageous to the commercial interests of both Governments". But the Russian government was having second thoughts too, fearing that railways would not only undermine its position in the Iranian market, but also open up the Russian provinces to British or German economic – and possibly political – penetration. Hence, on 11 November 1890, Russia secured an agreement by which "the Persian Government engages for the space of 10 years – neither itself to construct a railway in Persian territory nor to permit nor grant a Concession for the construction of railways to a Company or other persons". This agreement, described by the British as "sterilizing", was renewed in 1900 and for twenty years blocked all railway projects, whether British, such as the Quetta–Sīstān scheme; German, such as the line from Baghdad to Tehran; or Russian, such as the various suggestions for a railway through Khurāsān and the ambitious Sakhanskii project for a line from Rasht to Bushire and Bandar ʿAbbās.

After the expiry of the agreement, various new schemes were presented. In 1911, a British syndicate, including the Anglo-Persian Oil Company and Imperial Bank groups, secured a concession for a line from Muḥammara and/or Khaur Mūsā to Khurramābād. A Russian-sponsored scheme for a line from the Caspian to the Arabian Sea, to be jointly financed by Russian, French and British capital, was also considered. Neither was implemented, but the concession given, on 6 February 1913, to the Russian Discount and Loan Bank, for an 85-mile Julfa–Tabrīz line, with a 30-mile branch to Urmīya, was actually carried out during the War, the line reaching Urmīya in 1916. At the same time the British, who in 1905 had linked Quetta to Nushki, extended the line to Duzdāb (Zāhidān). Thus it may be said that, until the First World War, Anglo-Russian rivalry prevented all railway building in Iran.

Therefore, other means had to be found for moving goods within the country, especially to the ports. The British turned to the rivers, supplemented by roads, and the Russians to the roads alone. Steam navigation on the Tigris made the shipping of goods to Baghdad and thence transport by pack animals to Tehran through Qaṣr-i Shīrīn and Kirmānshāh advantageous. In 1888, under British pressure, the river Kārūn was opened to shipping as far as Ahvāz, a

distance of 120 miles, and a steamer service was quickly started by the Lynch company that operated on the Tigris. Shortly after, the upper stretch of the river from Ahvāz to Shūshtar pack animals carried goods to Iṣfahān and the interior. Traffic on the river increased rapidly, and was further stimulated by the development of the oil industry in the 1900s.

The Russians concentrated on road-building in the northern part of the country. Between 1893 and 1914, they built nearly 500 miles of roads, connecting Tehran with Enzeli (379 kilometres), Tabrīz with Julfa (135 kilometres) and Qazvīn with Hamadān (243 kilometres). Other roads were built by a British firm between Tehran and Qum (147 kilometres) and Qum and Arāk (135 kilometres). Shortly before the First World War, motor vehicles began to circulate in Iran, but the transport of both goods and passengers continued to be very slow and expensive. During the war, military operations caused severe damage to the roads, but this was partly offset by the 1,000 miles of roads built in the British sector from the coast to Shīrāz and beyond; motor traffic also showed an increase in this period. The port of Bushire was also improved.[4] However, by the end of the Qājār period, Iran was still almost devoid of internal modern transport and the impact of the latter on the country was negligible.

TRADE[5]

On the other hand, the transport developments described above greatly facilitated the expansion of foreign trade. In the 18th century, Iran's trade had sharply declined, but the first thirty years of Qājār rule saw a marked recovery, by way of both the Persian Gulf and the Black Sea. By 1860, total trade (imports and exports) amounted to some £5,000,000, or about twice as much in current prices, and perhaps three times as much in real terms, as it had been at the beginning of the century. By the 1880s, the total was around £7,500,000; in 1901, just over £9,000,000; in 1912–13 £18,250,000, and in 1913–14, £20,000,000. Since world prices in 1913 were close to those of 1860, the quadrupling of value between those two years represents a four-fold increase in real terms. It also implies a twelve-fold increase in 1800–1913, far below the corresponding growth in India, Transcaucasia, and most of the Middle Eastern countries.

Until the middle of the 19th century, imports and exports seem to have been

[4] See Sykes, *History* II, pp. 473–74, 528–32.

[5] The most useful works on this subject are the books by Bharier, Blau, Curzon, Entner, Issawi, Jamālzāda, Lorini and Yaganegi, listed in the bibliography, and the sources cited therein.

fairly well balanced. After that time, imports increased rapidly and, by the beginning of this century, exceeded exports by a third to a half. It is not clear how this trade deficit was covered: remittances by Iranian workers in Russia and elsewhere, foreign loans and investments, foreign travel, and some release, through revised minting procedures, of specie held in private hands,[6] seem to have been the main balancing factors, but there was also a significant amount of unrecorded exports.

The expansion of Iran's trade took place within the administrative framework set up by the Treaties of Gulistān and Turkmānchai. These provided that both Russian imports into Iran and exports from it would pay a 5% *ad valorem* duty, the same terms applying to Iranian trade with Russia. In 1841, Britain obtained the same privileges, as did the other Powers in the next few years. And although Russia had been the first to secure a commercial treaty, Britain, then by far the leading trader, proved the most vigilant in ensuring enforcement and preventing the Iranian government granting any monopolies, which had previously represented a large source of revenue, or the imposition of any prohibitions or restrictions on foreign trade.

No change was made in the tariff until 1903, when a new treaty was signed with Russia, followed immediately by Britain and other countries. This replaced the general *ad valorem* duty by specific ones, which favoured certain imports from Russia, notably cotton goods, tea, kerosene and sugar, over those from Britain and other countries. It also reduced or eliminated export duties on certain goods that chiefly went to Russia, such as cotton and rice, while raising those on some goods exported mainly to the British Empire, such as opium, wheat and linseed.

Those treaties and, more important, the world-wide economic forces at work, brought about significant shifts in the direction of trade. Malcolm's estimates for 1800 show that some five-sixths of Iran's trade was with Turkey, Afghanistan, Bukhārā and India, practically all the rest being with Russia. However, a significant proportion of imports from Turkey and India consisted of European goods, some of which were re-exported to Central Asia. By the 1850s, a drastic shift had taken place. According to Blau, imports of European goods through Trebizond alone accounted for half of Iran's total imports, to which should be added a substantial fraction of the quarter consisting of imports

[6] See P. W. Avery and J. B. Simmons, pp. 259–86, and Yaganegi, pp. 72–74, 99–104. From the fact that over the greater part of the period 1875–1914 the exchange rate of the *krān* exceeded the average market value of its silver content, this author concludes that Iran had a favourable balance of payments, and lists the main factors that may have provided the surplus.

from India. In both cases, the bulk of the merchandise was British, and it seems probable that, in the 1850s and 1860s, Britain supplied well over half of Iran's imports and took about a half of its exports. Russia's share of imports was put at under a tenth and in exports at about a third.[7]

Official Russian trade figures show a relatively small rise in terms of gold roubles between the 1830s and 1860s, but contemporary observers pointed out that much smuggling took place, and Blau's estimates tried to take this into account. However, starting in the 1870s, trade with Russia gathered momentum and the Russian customs returns show a rise in total trade from an annual average of 6.3 million gold roubles in the 1850s to one of 87.7 millions in 1909–14.[8] By then, Russia took some 70% of Iran's exports, supplied over 50% of her imports, and accounted for almost two-thirds of total trade. The share of the British Empire had fallen to a little over 25% of imports, 12% of exports and 20% of total trade; of this, somewhat under half was accounted for by India. The remaining 10 to 15% was shared by the Ottoman Empire, France, Germany and others.[9] Trade with Central Asia dwindled, since, once the railways had reached its borders, Afghanistan could more easily trade with India. In addition, the Russian economy absorbed the khanates after 1865.

The shift in Russia's favour can be partly explained by economic factors, especially lower costs of transport to Iran's well populated and relatively prosperous northern regions. But political factors also played a part. The Russian government actively promoted trade by sponsoring and subsidizing steamship services and roads, by extending help through a Loan and Discount Bank, and by putting export premiums on cotton goods and sugar.

The shifts in the composition of Iran's trade were no less drastic, with profound repercussions on its economic and social life. The commercial treaties prevented the Iranian government from using tariff protection to shelter local industry against the competition of European machine-made goods. Hence, the most striking feature of Iran's trade in the 19th century was the sharp rise in textile imports, particularly cotton goods, which, by the 1850s accounted for some two-thirds of the total imports. The value of textiles continued to increase until the First World War, but their share dropped slowly to a little over one half. The other main import item was "colonial goods", i.e. sugar, tea and spices. Tea-drinking, introduced from Russia, spread rapidly in the 19th century and both tea and sugar consumption increased greatly. By the 1850s, these two items

[7] Blau, *Commerzielle Zustände Persiens*, pp. 164–68.
[8] Entner, *Russo-Persian Commercial Relations*, *passim*.
[9] See Jamālzāda, *Ganj-i Shāyagān*, p. 11.

accounted for well over one-tenth of the total imports and, by 1900, for over a quarter. The balance consisted of hardware, glassware and, increasingly, kerosene. The very slow development of Iran is reflected in the very small amount of capital goods imported; for the years 1900–27, the proportion of total imports represented by capital goods has been put at only 3%.[10]

The impact of the massive import of cheap textiles on Iranian handicrafts was devastating, and aggravated by changes in taste and fashion, which made consumers prefer foreign styles to native. Various foreign observers writing in the 1840s and 1850s, describe the decay of such ancient and flourishing handicraft centres as Kāshān, Iṣfahān, Shīrāz, Kirmān and Yazd, owing to these factors, was well as to the removal of the capital and court to Tehran.[11] The decline of handicrafts, together with the growth of the central government and bureaucracy, also caused a weakening of the guilds that had previously played such an important part in Iranian cities.[12] However, figures for the end of the 19th or the beginning of the 20th century show that many of the old textile handicrafts did manage to survive until the First World War and even later, and exports of textiles to the Caucasus and Central Asia, which had been very large at the beginning of the 19th century, did not completely cease until the war.[13]

While foreign trade undermined the most important traditional handicrafts, it stimulated those connected with expanding exports. Among these was leather: increased demand from Russia led to an expansion of production and the replacement, especially in Mashhad and Hamadān, of traditional workshops by factories employing up to 40 or 50 workers. Similar developments for the same reasons occurred in the production of henna in the Kirmān district and of opium in various parts of the country. But the outstanding example of the expansion and transformation of a craft owing to foreign demand was carpets. In the 1870s, growing affluence in Europe and the United States began to create a large demand for Persian carpets, and improved steam navigation reduced the high costs of transporting them. British, Russian and German capital was invested in the industry and factories and large workshops, some employing several hundred workers. Iranian merchants from Tabrīz and elsewhere also set up large workshops, but the bulk of production continued to come from the traditional centres, financed and supervised by merchants. Output expanded greatly and

[10] Bharier, *Economic Development in Iran*, p. 107.

[11] For details, see the despatches of the British consul, K.E. Abbott, the observations in Jakob Polak, *Persien*, and the account given in *Jughrāfiyā-yi Iṣfahān*, translated and reproduced in Issawi, pp. 258–82. [12] For details, see the article by N.A. Kuznetsova translated in *ibid*, pp. 284–92.

[13] *Ibid*, pp. 268, 300–1.

exports multiplied, amounting in 1914 to about £1,000,000, or nearly one-eighth of Iran's total exports.[14]

No less significant, and more widespread in its impact, was the effect of foreign trade on agriculture. Silk production had sharply declined in the 18th century, but rose steadily in the 19th, to a peak of 1,000 tons in 1864. An important part in this growth was played by Greek and other exporters, who advanced funds to the growers directly or through small merchants, many of them Armenian. In 1864, however, the muscardine disease reached Iran and, by the 1870s, the crop was reduced by about four-fifths. Once more, the foreign exporters helped silk to recover, this time by introducing disease-resistant silkworm-eggs from Japan. However, at the outbreak of the First World War, output was still well below the 1864 peak.

Opium also expanded thanks to foreign demand. A successful shipment to China in 1823 by an Iranian merchant was followed by a slow increase in production and trade and, by 1859, exports amounted to nearly 60,000 lbs, rising thereafter to nearly 1,600,000 in 1880; after that, production levelled off, while rising domestic consumption diminished the amount available for export. Opium was estimated to have a net monetary return three times as high as wheat, and displaced that crop in many areas, contributing to the grain shortage of the 1870s.

Rice and cotton also responded to foreign demand, particularly Russia. The growing output of rice had been consumed domestically but, after the 1880s, it went increasingly to the Russian market, helped by both the imposition by Russia of a high duty on imports of rice from other countries and the completion of the Transcaspian railway which reduced costs of transport to Turkistan. Exports to Russia rose from £25,000 in the 1870s to over £200,000 in the 1890s and averaged £500,000 in 1904–8, by which time they amounted to nearly half the total output of Gīlān.

Cotton exports, quite significant in the 17th century, seem to have ceased in the 18th and the first half of the 19th. Around 1852, however, American cotton was introduced in the Urmīya region, presumably by American missionaries and, a few years later, small exports to Russia were recorded. The American Civil War gave a temporary stimulus to cotton production and exports in Iran, as in other parts of the world, but a more permanent one came from growing demand in Russia. Russian and Armenian merchants helped the process, by

[14] Sobotsinskii, *Persiya*, pp. 228–9; Abdullaev, *Promyshlennost'*, pp. 115–22; Issawi, pp. 301–305.

advancing money, setting up ginneries, distributing seeds and raising standards of production. As with rice, Iranian cotton was helped by higher duties imposed in Russia on other foreign cottons and by improved transport. The area under cotton cultivation expanded rapidly, to over 100,000 hectares on the eve of the First World War, and output was estimated at 33,000 tons of which 25,000, worth about £1,500,000, were exported, almost entirely to Russia.

The expansion in crops for export had repercussions on Iranian agriculture. With the exceptions noted above, there were no important changes in techniques. But the opportunity of higher income for landlords and increased participation of foreign and Iranian merchants and moneylenders in agriculture, replaced traditional agrarian relations by more "capitalistic" ones. Land rents seem to have risen sharply, there is evidence of growing concentration of ownership, and some large landlords appear to have taken a more active interest in their farms.[15]

Lastly, a few words may be said about the agents of this trade. At the beginning of the 19th century, practically all the foreign trade of Iran seems to have been in Iranian hands. By the middle of the century, a considerable part had passed into European control and it is probable that the foreign share continued to increase until the First World War, by which time it accounted for the bulk of Iran's foreign trade. Perhaps the most important factor in this shift was the favourable status enjoyed by foreigners due to the Capitulations and the Commercial Treaties. Although this did not fully protect them against arbitrary action on the part of Iranian officials – British and French consular despatches frequently complain of this – it severely limited the scope of such acts. The Iranians had no safeguard against their own government and hence were not only far less secure in their property, but had to pay higher taxes. A despatch from the British Consul in Tabrīz in 1851 shows that whereas a European merchant paid 5% on his imports, an Iranian paid $7\frac{1}{2}$% on textiles and 14% on sugar and, in addition, was subject to *rāhdārlik* (road tax) every time his goods passed through an Iranian town.[16]

As regards the trade of Tabrīz – which at that time constituted about half the national total – more specific information is available. The Russian traveller L. Berezin, who visited Iran in 1842, states that, "The trade of Tabriz . . . falls into two sharply defined periods: until 1837 the Persians themselves were predominant and after that date foreign merchants, including Russian, were preponder-

[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 231–252 and Robert McDaniel, "Economic Change and Economic Resiliency in 19th Century Persia", *Iranian Studies* IV (1971).

[16] Stevens to Sheil, 26 February 1851, FO60/166.

ant."[17] Berezin attributes the shift to the effects of the 1837 international financial crisis, which found Iranian importers overstocked and indebted to various firms in Constantinople, making many of them bankrupt. At this point, the Greek firm of Ralli of Constantinople opened a branch in Tabrīz. With offices in Manchester, Marseilles, Odessa, and elsewhere, operating first under Russian and then British protection, Ralli soon became the leader in the field and later developed into a major international firm, with headquarters in London. Its example was swiftly followed by others, and, writing in 1849, a well-informed Austrian, Rudolf Gödel, listed three Greek firms, one Austrian and five belonging to Armenian or Georgian Russian subjects.[18] The Iranian merchants of Tabrīz attempted to fight back by forming a combination in 1844, as did those of Kāshān in 1845, but both broke down.[19] Nor was the Iranian government more successful when, in 1841, it banned the consumption of tea; it claimed that the "Chinese mixed poison in their tea", but the true cause, according to the British Consul, was that the merchants wanted to embarrass the Russian Georgians "who have the principal traffic in that article, whereas native merchants have none".[20]

In other parts of the country, Persian Gulf trade was increasingly handled by such British firms as Gray, Paul and Co., in the second half of the century, while the rapidly expanding Russian trade was conducted mainly by Armenians, Georgians, and other Russian subjects. A list compiled by a German observer shows 14 large British and 23 Russian trading firms in Iran in 1914.[21] In addition to the diplomatic support of their governments, these firms received credit and other aid from the British Imperial Bank and the Russian Discount and Loan Bank.

The expansion of Iran's foreign trade was halted by the First World War and the great dislocations it caused in Iran and the neighbouring countries. Cotton output fell to a negligible level and the main market for carpets was lost. The volume of exports other than oil declined from an average of over 276,000 tons in 1911–13 to a low of 49,000 in 1918, with an almost equal decrease in value, and imports fell from 323,000 tons to a low of 130,000 in 1920. It was not until the early 1930s that the level of pre-war export and import values was regained. There was also a sharp drop in Russia's share of the trade, and a corresponding increase in that of Britain and India: as regards imports, a shift took place during

[17] L. Berezin, pp. 58–66. [18] Rudolf Gödel, pp. 43–51.

[19] Bonham to Sheil, 28 June and 29 July 1844, FO60/107; Abbott to Aberdeen, 31 March 1845, FO60/117. [20] Bonham to Bidwell, 12 March 1841 and 28 August 1841, FO60/82.

[21] Litten, *Persien*, pp. 108–9, 185–6.

the war, but Iran's exports to Russia continued at a high level until the Russian Civil War. It should be added that in 1920, when British influence was at its height, the tariff was again changed. Duties were considerably increased, giving Iran both some protection and added revenue, but charges on traditional exports from Russia such as sugar, matches and petroleum rose more than the average and those on certain leading imports from the British Empire, such as tea and cotton, were either reduced or remained unchanged. These duties remained in force until Iran recovered its autonomy as regards tariffs in 1928.[22]

FINANCE, FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND CONCESSIONS[23]

During the period under review, Iran was on a silver standard and the value of its currency steadily depreciated – from 10 *krāns* (1 *tūmān*) to the pound sterling in 1800 to 20 in 1840; 25 in 1870; and 55 or over on the eve of the First World War. Until the early 1870s the main factor depressing the krān was the reduction in its weight and fineness but, after that date, the rapid fall in the world price of silver relative to gold – due to the shift of most advanced countries from a silver to a gold standard – was an even more powerful force. During the war, the value of silver rose, and with it the rate of the krān to a peak of 25 in 1919, but it then fell steadily again, even after the introduction of exchange control in 1930. Such a large decline in the value of the currency was, naturally, accompanied by a sharp rise in prices. This, in turn, affected various sections of the population differently, and the data suggest that skilled workers suffered a decline in real wages, and the same may also have been true of unskilled workers.[24]

Modern banking came late to Iran. In 1888, a British bank, the New Oriental Corporation, opened offices in six Iranian towns. The following year, the Imperial Bank of Persia, also a British firm, was founded in settlement of claims related to the rescinded Reuter concession. Among its privileges was the exclusive right, for sixty years, to issue banknotes. In addition to ordinary commercial transactions, it made loans to the government. In 1890, it took over the New Oriental Corporation and thereafter opened other branches. At the outbreak of the First World War both its note issue and deposits had almost reached £1,000,000.

The British bank was inevitably followed by a Russian. In 1891, the Banque

[22] Bharier, pp. 104–13; Yaganegi, pp. 52–4.

[23] The most useful works on this subject are the books by Curzon, Issawi, Jamālzāda, Kazemzadeh, Litten, Lorini, Sykes and Yaganegi, listed in the bibliography, and the sources given therein.

[24] Issawi, pp. 40–2, 339–45; Yaganegi, pp. 63–80.

des Prêts was formed, also in compensation for a cancelled railway concession originally granted to Poliakov. In 1899, it was taken over by the Russian government and its name changed to Banque d'Escompte de Perse (*Uchyetnossudny Bank*). In addition to supporting Russian enterprises and lending freely to Iranians for both financial and political purposes, it too made large loans to the Iranian government.

Iran began contracting foreign loans rather later than its Indian, Middle Eastern, and North African neighbours. The first, for £500,000, was from the Imperial Bank, in 1892, to compensate the British Tobacco Corporation. Two Russian loans, in 1900 and 1902, followed, aggregating 32.5 million roubles (about £3,250,000), part of which was used to pay off the British loan. In the following ten years, two more Russian loans were contracted (for 60 million krāns or £1,100,000 in 1911 and for £200,000 in 1913), and five British or Anglo-Indian, aggregating £1,850,000. By 1913, Iran's consolidated debt stood at £6,754,000, with an annual service charge of £537,000. The latter represented about a quarter of government expenditure, absorbing the greater part of the customs revenues pledged as a guarantee for the various loans. These were rising steadily, due to expanding trade and the reorganization of the Customs Administration by Belgian and other advisers. There were also floating debts of nearly £900,000 to foreign creditors.

During the war, the Iranian government received large advances from the British government and, by 1922, its debt to Britain amounted to £5,590,000. But two developments greatly lightened the debt burden. First, the Soviet government cancelled all the debts owed to Russia, and secondly, the large expenditure by the belligerents in Iran and the depreciation of the pound sterling raised the exchange rate of the krān and practically halved the value of the sterling debt. The rise in the general price level at home and abroad, and the increase of government revenue further reduced the weight of the debt and made redemption easier. By the mid 1920s the total outstanding debt had been brought down to an insignificant amount.[25]

In the search for revenue, numerous concessions were granted to foreigners. The most important have been mentioned, and those in manufacturing and mining are discussed below. Here three concessions will be briefly reviewed. That given to Lianozov, an Armenian of Russian nationality in 1873, for the caviar fisheries in the Caspian, proved the most durable. It was regularly renewed, the annual rate of payment to the Iranian government rising slowly

[25] See Issawi, pp. 370–72, Jamālzāda, pp. 152–6, Sykes, *History* II, p. 523.

from 410,000 krāns (£16,000) in 1873, to 480,000 krāns (£19,000) in 1911. In 1927, the Soviet government, which had taken up Lianozov's rights, set up a company that operated the fisheries until 1953.

In 1888, a Belgian firm received exclusive rights to build railways from Tehran to Qazvīn and to Qum. In fact it built only a 30 kilometre line from Tehran to the quarries of Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm, and ran three lines of horse-drawn trams in Tehran.

The third concession was the most controversial, and had to be rescinded. In 1890 a British company, the Imperial Tobacco Corporation of Persia, received a monopoly of the purchase, processing and sale of all Iranian tobacco, which by then constituted an important export item. In return, the government was to receive £15,000 a year plus 25% of net profits after payment of a 5% dividend to share-holders. The opposition of the tobacco merchants, backed by the religious classes and the Russians, resulted in a major political crisis, and the concession was cancelled. The Company obtained compensation of £500,000.

It is very difficult to estimate accurately the amount of foreign investment in Iran before the First World War. The best available figures are those compiled by Litten who, states, however, that they are only "rough estimates and make no claim to accuracy".[26] Russian investments were put at 163,750,000 roubles, perhaps £16,000,000; of this, 44.5 million roubles represented loans to the Iranian government; 48 million in mortgages, 38 million in roads, railways, ports and telegraphs, 11.8 million in the share capital of the Russian bank, 10 million in the Lianozov caviar fisheries and 20 million in various shipping companies and trading firms. British investments were estimated at £9,700,000; of this £1.7 million represented loans to the Iranian government, £2.75 million the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's capital, and £1 million that of the Imperial Bank, while the Persian Railways Syndicate's capital was put at £3 million, a sum not actually invested in Iran. Belgian investments, in railways, streetcars and factories, were put at 13 million francs, or £500,000, and German investment, mainly in a carpet-making firm, at a slightly higher figure. Altogether, foreign investment in Iran cannot have exceeded £30 million.

MANUFACTURING, MINING, AND PETROLEUM[27]

As in other parts of the Middle East and in most underdeveloped countries, there was very little industry in Iran until the 1930s. The development of

[26] Litten, *passim.*

[27] The most useful works on this subject are the books by Bahrier, Elwell-Sutton, Fāteh, Issawi, Jamālzāda, Līsānī, Longrigg and Lorini, listed in the bibliography. See also Ch. 18.

manufacturing was impeded by the usual obstacles: the small size and dispersion of the population, the poverty of the masses, the absence of water or mechanical transport, the lack of water power and the high cost of fuel, the lack of skilled labour and technical and supervisory personnel, the scarcity and timorousness of capital and, not least, the fact that the government was uninterested in industrial development, and, even had it been, it would have been unable to protect local industries against foreign competition, because of the Commercial Treaties. A few government attempts in 1849 to set up modern factories, and similar private ones in the next thirty years, ended in failure. So did a more ambitious undertaking by a Belgian company in the 1890s, to establish glass and sugar factories and a gasworks.[28] But, concurrently, several small factories in fields such as cotton ginning, spinning and weaving, silk reeling, matches, soap and brewing, and a few electric power plants were set up by Iranians. However, the low level of industrialization on the eve of the First World War is indicated by the estimate of total employment in modern factories: 1,700 persons, as compared with about 100,000 in handicrafts.[29] There was no further development during the war and very little in the 1920s.

Mining, too, made very little progress. Iran possesses a wide variety of minerals, notably iron, copper, and coal, but most of these are in small deposits. In the period under review, they continued to be worked by traditional methods and output was small.[30] In 1890, the British-owned Persian Bank Mining Rights Corporation was formed, with a capital of £1,000,000, to take over the rights given to the Imperial Bank of Persia as part of the settlement of the Reuter concession. Surveys were made but no mining undertaken, except in oil (see below) and in 1894 the company went into liquidation. Two concessions granted to Russians in the Qaradāgh region in 1908 and along the Julfa–Tabrīz railway in 1913 also failed to produce results. The only foreign-operated mines in Iran were the iron oxide deposits on Hurmuz Island, worked by the British firm of Strick and Company, exporting some 3,000–4,000 tons a year. In 1906, the Wönckhaus, a German enterprise, received a concession for the iron oxide deposits of Abū Mūsā, but British opposition, resulting in an international incident, led to its cancellation the following year.[31]

No mention has, so far, been made of Iran's most valuable resource, oil. Until the beginning of this century, Iran was of greater interest to the outside world as a consumer, rather than producer, of petroleum. Russian oil had been brought into the country by ship across the Caspian for centuries, and, with the

[28] For the latter see Lorini, *La Persia Economica*, pp. 159–63. [29] Abdullaev, pp. 199–212.
[30] For details see Curzon, *Persia* II, pp. 510–22, and Issawi, pp. 282–4.
[31] See Eugene Staley, "Business and Politics in the Persian Gulf".

development of the modern petroleum industry, kerosene and crude oil were shipped in increasing quantity; some of the refining was done at Enzeli until 1896 when, due to a refund of duties, Russian exports came to consist entirely of refined products. In 1908, Nobel Brothers started operations in Iran, building storage tanks in Enzeli and Rasht and a 16 kilometre kerosene pipeline. Thereafter, Russian products captured almost all the Iranian market. In the south, however, the Standard Oil Company competed sucessfully and, starting in 1912, the products of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company began to take over an increasing share of the market, completely driving out Russian oil by the end of the 1920s.

Iran also drew Russian attention as a transit point between the oil fields of Baku and India and the Far East, where high transport costs were making competition against American oil difficult for the Russians. In 1884, and more vigorously in 1901, projects were presented by the oil industry to the Russian government for a kerosene pipeline to the Persian Gulf or the Indian Ocean. However divisions on this question within the Russian government weakened the project, and it was finally ended by the British government's contention in 1902 that such a pipeline would violate the concession granted to D'Arcy the previous year.[32]

The first wells sunk by a foreign concern in Iran, Hotz and Company of Bushire in 1884, failed to produce oil and three attempts by the Persian Bank Mining Rights Corporation, in 1889–92, were equally unsuccessful. In 1892, however, a French geologist, de Morgan, published an article on the oil seepages he had studied at Kend-i Shīrīn, in western Iran, and interested W.K. D'Arcy, an Englishman who had made a fortune in Australian mining. Backed by the British authorities D'Arcy secured, on 28 May 1901, a sixty-year concession for the exploration, exploitation and export of petroleum. The conceded area covered 480,000 square miles, excluding only the five northern provinces in deference to Russian susceptibilities. The Iranian government was to receive 16% of the net profits, as well as 20,000 shares of £1 each and £20,000 in cash. Exploration began in 1902. The results were at first disappointing and, in 1905, D'Arcy had to turn for financial aid to the Concessions Syndicate, which was formed for the purpose by the Burmah Oil Company. Operations were then resumed and, in 1908, abundant oil was struck at Masjid-i Sulaimān. This led to the formation of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company on 14 April, 1909, with a capital of £2,000,000. A refinery was built at Ābādān, supplied by a 140 mile

[32] See the article by B.V. Ananich, "Rossiya i Kontsessiya d'Arsi", translated in Issawi, pp. 327–34.

pipeline and, in August 1912, the first shipment of oil was made. In 1913, a contract was signed with the British Admiralty for the supply of fuel oil and, on 20 May 1914, the share value of the company was slightly more than doubled, the balance being taken up by the British Treasury which thus secured a 51% interest in the company. Output of oil rose steadily: from 43,000 tons in 1912 to 273,000 in 1914, 897,000 in 1918 and 2,327,000 in 1922, and continued increasing until 1930. The Iranian government received a total of £1,330,000 in 1912–18, and thereafter averaged over £500,000 a year, in addition to a special payment, under the "Armitage-Smith agreement" of £1,000,000 in 1920, in settlement of claims and counterclaims.[33] By then, the industry was employing some 20,000 men and making a significant contribution to the development of southern Iran. Yet it would have been difficult to predict (in 1922, or even ten or twenty years after) its enormous growth over the next decades and the crucial rôle it later played in the Iranian economy, as described in Chapters 17 and 18.

[33] Bharier, pp. 155–9.

CHAPTER 17

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, 1921–1979

THE IRANIAN ECONOMY IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THE CENTURY

Economic conditions in Iran before 1912, when commercial oil exports were first made, were perceived by foreign travellers to be deteriorating. Curzon's sweeping conclusions on the state of manufacturing industry in Iran, that "factories, as the term is understood in Europe, do not exist in Persia; and the multiplication and economy of labour-force, by the employment of steam-power, or even water-power, is hardly known" and that "there was a decadence of native ingenuity, consequent upon the importation of cheap European substitutes,"[1] were found to hold true in the early years of the twentieth century. Issawi noted that "Iran . . . was relatively little affected by the [economic] changes taking place in the world until the exploitation of oil."[2] Even as late as 1934, European assessment of the Iranian economy stressed the lack of discernible development of a modern economy,[3] while there is evidence that the oil industry operated as an economic enclave with few linkages created into other domestic activities.[4] Agriculture, too, while not lacking entirely its own dynamic of change[5] arising from natural events such as occurrence of good and bad crop years, or political interventions for reasons of taxation and competition for land ownership, was for the most part unaffected by systematic improvements in production and yields.[6] Not until 1937 was there an attempt to provide a new basis for modernization,[7] a move that came to nothing as a result of Rižā Shāh's

[1] Curzon, *Persia* II, p. 523.

[2] Issawi, "Middle East economic development 1815–1914", pp. 395 and 407.

[3] British Admiralty, *Persia*, Naval Intelligence Handbook, 1945, p. 457.

[4] Katouzian, *The Political Economy of Modern Iran*, p. 129. See also Mahdavy, "Patterns and problems of economic development in rentier states", in which the author elaborates a case for the Iranian oil industry remaining as an enclave as late as 1950.

[5] See Lambton, *Landlord and Peasant*, chaps. VII and VIII.

[6] Rižā Shāh's reign was marked by attempts to improve the structure of landholding. See McLachlan, "Land reform", p. 689.

[7] A *qānūn-i ʿumrān* was enacted in November 1937 providing for agricultural development through enforcement of cultivation on landed estates and provision of rules under which local government officials could implement improvements at the expense of the landlords.

lack of conviction in the need for agricultural change and, later, the difficult position of the government after his abdication in 1941.[8]

The base on which economic development took place after 1921 was extremely poor. Population estimates suggest a total of 11,370,000 persons in 1921, at which time growth, according to Bharier,[9] was less than one per cent each year, constrained by high levels of infant mortality and losses, among the rest of the population, due to disease and famine. More than eighty per cent of the population were resident in villages and small towns with less than 30,000 inhabitants. Few areas boasted population densities above one hundred persons per square mile outside the Tabrīz, Caspian and Kārūn agricultural districts. In much of central and eastern Iran densities rarely exceeded ten per square mile. Rural communities lived in comparative isolation, often because of the morphology of the village agricultural lands or limited access to water resources, and were physically distinct from nearby settlements, almost as individual oases. A tribal population probably numbering more than two million persons occupied the Zagros Mountain system and the Persian Gulf coast.

Government finances were in a chaotic condition in the aftermath of the revolution of 1905–6 and the economy was depressed by regional revolt and maladministration.[10] Other than the oil industry in the south,[11] the economy was concerned almost entirely with subsistence. Estimates of national income in 1921 are not reliable though one economist suggested that the total value of goods and services at prices of 1959 was not more than 80,000 million rials, a level little above the "breadline".[12] Agriculture was the main concern of the majority of the people of Iran at that time; as much as 85% of the active labour force was engaged directly or indirectly in farming.

THE ECONOMY UNDER RIẒĀ SHĀH

Following the *coup d'état* of February 1921 that brought Riẓā Khān to political power as Commander-in-Chief of the army and Minister of War, it was quickly appreciated that modernization of the army and the prosecution of the campaigns against dissident tribal groups would require considerable and expanding financial support. In 1922 the government recruited the services of Dr

[8] Lambton, *op. cit.*, p. 193. [9] Bharier, *Economic Development*, pp. 24–6.

[10] Millspaugh, *The American Task*.

[11] Direct payments by Anglo-Persian Oil Company in 1921 were £590,000.

[12] Bharier, p. 59.

Millspaugh and a small team of specialists in financial administration from the United States of America. By means of special legislation and the activities of the American financial advisers, a beginning was made in reform of the economy, though this by and large concerned itself more with improving the efficiency of existing production and its revenue yield than with creation of new productive assets.

Modernization of Iran by Rižā Shāh began immediately after he took over effective leadership of the state. In summer 1922 a first important attempt was made to reform the generally chaotic and ineffective system of domestic taxation. Dr Millspaugh arrived to act as senior financial adviser. He put in train a series of changes affecting taxes for agriculture and the *Majlis* passed laws enabling the registration of land to be undertaken from 1922. The approach tended, however, to be largely administrative, with improvement of an existing system rather than thorough-going reform. Ultimately, Rižā Shāh appeared to be more interested in augmenting and making more reliable the flow of funds with which to finance development of the army and his own power base than with changing the basics of the Iranian economy.

In agriculture, the bedrock of the economy, Rižā Shāh initiated a modest level of change in land ownership. He abolished the *tuyūl* (land assignment) and even began a cadastral survey of the country, but he stopped far short of taking up the reform of land ownership that had been proposed at the time of the Constitutional Movement earlier in the century. He appeared unwilling to upset either the major landowners or his own position as an important holder of land. There was a programme for the distribution of public domain lands in 1932 and 1933, affecting parts of Luristān, Kirmānshāh and Āẕarbāījān, together with further legislation in 1937 providing for land allocations from the public domain in Sīstān. In practice, the division of the public domain lands in those areas did little to serve the interests of the peasants. Corruption and inefficiency ensured that the best lands were acquired by the existing landowners and by regional officials of the government.[13]

A tax on land was promulgated in 1926, under which there was to be a three per cent levy on the produce taken from the land. Unfortunately, this tax relied upon completion of the cadastral survey to be effective and progress in that area was extremely slow even in the comparatively accessible areas of the country. Acknowledgement of the failure of the land tax came in 1934 when it was

[13] Lambton, *op cit.*, pp. 238–58.

replaced by a tax on agricultural output together with a form of income tax, both payable in kind.

Few financial rewards accrued from the modernization of agricultural taxation and Riżā Shāh ultimately turned to other means of raising funds from rural areas. A number of state monopolies and monopoly trading companies were created during the 1930s. Most important agricultural products were managed by the monopolies, including cotton, tobacco, tea, dried fruits, sugar and opium. In addition to the revenue effects of the monopolies, they also helped to stimulate better yields and improved quality of products, though activities of the state in agriculture also fostered a growing bureaucratic intervention in rural areas, not always to the advantage of the peasants or landowners.

Perhaps for agriculture the most positive outcome of Riżā Shāh's reign was the innovation of new crops that was encouraged by the government as part of Riżā Shāh's policy of reducing the state's dependence on external supplies of basic products. Sugar beet cultivation was introduced into the country on a wide scale and rapidly became a prime cash crop in the better irrigated areas. There was an expansion of the cotton acreage and a beginning to tea cultivation in the northern districts of Gīlān and Māzandarān as a result of direct government encouragement, innovations that were to alter land use and agricultural economy deeply throughout the Caspian coastlands.

Riżā Shāh's interventions into the livestock sector were not initially designed for economic purposes.[14] Enforced settlement of tribal groups as part of his attempt to weaken politically the tribal groups that practised nomadism, particularly in the Zagros region of the country, had the effect of permitting more secure forms of sedentary agriculture, both within tribal territories and lands adjacent to them that had formerly been threatened by pressures from the nomads. The livestock holding of the pastoral nomads did, however, decline and it is thought that numbers of sheep and goats in Iran never reached the levels prevailing in the 1920s.

In addition to concern with the traditionally important areas of the agricultural economy, the governments under Riżā Shāh gave some attention to modernization of manufacturing.[15] Although some minor essays in industry had been attempted before 1921, Iran possessed only an, albeit sophisticated, handicraft industry before the drive to industrialization embarked upon in the years 1931–41. In this period the government set up plants to manufacture light

[14] Barth, *Nomads of South Persia.* [15] Banani, *The Modernization of Iran.*

weaponry and ammunition but also became involved in textiles, manufacture of construction materials, and processing of agricultural raw materials. Industrialization went hand in hand with modernization of the transport systems within the country and the improved provision of banking, credit and storage services.[16] The construction of the Trans-Iranian Railway was a major achievement in this sphere though less dramatic investments in roads and ports also provided new opportunities for the domestic economy to take advantage of a slowly growing internal market.[17]

In keeping with the nationalistic element within Riżā Shāh's policies, a new national bank was established in 1927 as Bank Melli. It was given authority to control the note issue, replacing the British Imperial Bank in this rôle. Other banks for agriculture, industry and mortgages, as also a National Savings Bank, were set up in this period with the same objectives in view.

It has been suggested with some truth, that Riżā Shāh's concern with the economy arose solely from his preoccupation with military requirements. Construction of roads and railways enabled rapid deployment of troops in this at times unsettled country, while creation of monopolies for the agricultural sector simply enabled a better form of taxation to be imposed with which to sustain the growing military infrastructure Riżā Shāh required. Yet, the additions to the transport networks and the provision of improved banking permitted a modest beginning to industrialization and gave the country a first experience of a modern economy outside the oil sector.

THE IRANIAN ECONOMY IN THE TIME OF MUḤAMMAD RIŻĀ SHĀH

It may be argued that Iranian domestic economic policies under Muḥammad Riżā Shāh were formulated in large degree to achieve both internal and external political objectives. In particular, economic and related social developments in the years after 1947 were intended increasingly to separate the supporters of the young Shah from the conservative elements of the population, including the nationalists, who saw the main economic task as the removal of British and other foreign control from the oil industry, and the religious classes, who feared that modernization of the economy would undermine the strength of Islam.[18] During the period of the fifteenth Majlis, a proposed seven year development plan and legislation enabling the establishment of a Plan Commission, which became the Plan Organisation, served to divide the two sides, the Shah gather-

[16] Knapp, "1921–41: The period of Riza Shah", pp. 35–6.
[17] Cottrell *et al.*, *The Persian Gulf States*, pp. 613–14.
[18] Marlowe, *Iran*, p. 132.

ing around himself those who saw salvation of the country in speedy economic transformation. From the early 1960s the régime sought to improve its political standing by generating support from the masses through improving standards of living and the provision of greater welfare benefits. Increasing national prosperity also enabled the Shah to enhance his regional strength and pay for a growing military machine. It might be suggested, too, that the Shah justified the concentration of political power in his own hands during the late 1960s and 1970s on the grounds that such a system permitted a rapid and successful expansion of economic activity.[19] Economic growth certainly allowed the régime to provide opportunities for economic gain and positions of well-paid authority for the middle classes, and assisted in the process of co-option of those who otherwise might have been the government's most intelligent critics.[20]

It may be said that the Shah succeeded in restraining political opposition to his rule for as long as the economic condition of the people showed demonstrable improvement year by year and there remained scope for entrepreneurs and others to find satisfactions as available resources increased. The years 1964 to 1973 outstandingly exemplified this. Comparative political quiescence was the concomitant of prosperity. After the considerable increase in oil revenues from October 1973, the linkages between the economic and political policies of the government were eroded and had ceased to exist by the Iranian year 1977–8. It is notable that within two years of that date the Shah's régime had fallen. Other powerful forces were at work in the situation, but it is significant though negative evidence that there was close correlation between economic distress and political unrest between 1977 and 1979.

Part of the Shah's motivation in economic policy arose from understandable but often underrated humanitarian and nationalist sentiments. In 1945 the ambassador of the United States of America in Tehran reported that the Shah is "deeply distressed over poverty and disease among his people, their low standard of living and bad working conditions".[21] The Shah refused, with apparent sincerity, to be crowned as ruler of the country for twenty years after his accession since he had no wish to be monarch of a backward state. His devotion to economic change brought with it high costs for Iran. In what remained throughout his reign an oil-based economy, growth was purchased mainly through expanding oil revenues, themselves largely a function of increased volumes of oil exports. Not only did this result in withdrawal of the

[19] Zabih, *Iran's Revolutionary Upheaval*, p. 5.
[20] Zonis, *The Political Elite of Iran* (Princeton, 1971).
[21] Greaves, "1942–1976: the reign of Muhammad Riza Shah", p. 65.

nation's clearly finite oil reserves at an accelerated rate, but it meant continuing dependence on foreign markets together with reliance on foreign technology, high levels of imports and the ceding of appreciable control over domestic economic policies to foreign interests.[22]

Possibly the most pronounced characteristic of the Iranian economy since 1941 was its tendency towards cyclical patterns of growth and decline, often with great frequency. Among the effects of the Second World War and the occupation of Iran by the Allies was destruction of the embryonic industries created by Riżā Shāh, the loss of control of the economy by the Iranian government, severe price inflation, and accelerating migration of rural people to the towns. A minor recovery in the situation after the end of the war was cut short by the intervention of the Anglo-Iranian oil crisis. A short period of growth in the economy between 1955 and 1960 ended in the onset of financial disorder and the imposition of an economic stabilization programme from 1960 to 1963. Thereafter, a slow return to economic health, that ran until 1973 in an ultimate peaking of the economy, was ended by a hiatus in the oil boom, and the recession that affected the economy adversely from 1976.

But while the period of rule of Muḥammad Riżā Shāh was subject to cyclical effects of growth and recession, it also experienced what appeared to be a magnification of the swing between the two, especially after 1964. There was a political cost to the movement of the economy from high rates of growth to periods of severe depression. The ordinary people became increasingly affected by changes in the economic situation. They benefitted more and suffered more from the greater amplification of trends towards boom and slump. There is some evidence that the population, especially that element of it in the towns, was unable and even unwilling to bear the strain of uneven and unpredictable changes in their economic fortunes arising from what increasingly was interpreted as inept management by the government, particularly after 1976.

STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT 1941–79

Iran began its first stumbling attempts at national economic planning in the late 1940s.[23] At that time the country had access to credits accumulated with the Allies during the war and was hopeful that the USA would be willing to make

[22] Katouzian, p. 324. In reality Iranian perceptions of the degree of control wielded by overseas interests were exaggerated. Foreign investment averaged only $65 million per annum in the period 1972/3–1977/8 and it may be argued that Iranian problems sprang more from too little than too much foreign involvement in modern industry.

[23] In July 1947 Morrison-Knudsen submitted a report on economic development to the Iranian government. This was followed by a full economic study by Overseas Consultants Inc., in 1948–9, which in large measure became the basis for the first seven-year plan.

available generous volumes of economic aid. The Iranian ruling classes were not united in a belief that economic development was the first priority of the state. Policies of the strongly nationalist groups in the National Front together with albeit uncertain support from the extremist factions of the right and left, were directed towards liberation of the Iranian oil industry from the control of the British. Other considerations were secondary and, in consequence, the young Shah's plans for rapid economic change within Iran were frustrated and brought to a halt in the Anglo-Iranian oil crisis of 1951. Dr Muṣaddiq and his colleagues in the National Front, while offering a radical economic programme in their policies, attempted little and achieved even less in practice.

The return to rule by the Shah after the overthrow of Dr Muṣaddiq brought with it a renewed measure of US support for the Iranian economy. A new economic plan was formulated and launched with US assistance. The main elements of the plan were construction of what were then large multipurpose projects such as the dam schemes at Karaj, and on the rivers Diz and Safīd Rūd, which had the political advantage of being highly visible even though they carried economic disadvantages, absorbing the bulk of financial resources available to the government. Privately sponsored industrial developments made appreciable progress in this same period and were directed towards factories making consumer goods for local markets, particularly Tehran.

Oil revenues accruing to Iran grew rapidly in the period 1954–60 as the new oil consortium in the south sought to recover ground lost during the Anglo-Iranian dispute. The rate of economic expansion proved to be greater than the immature infrastructure could stand. In consequence, inflation affected the economy with growing severity. At the same time, the flow of aid funds from the USA began to fall off and the government found itself short of finance in view of the commitments to economic development and defence expenditures already made. As the government's problems became apparent, the private sector suffered a loss of confidence and few immediate benefits were purchased by the large-scale water resources projects, none of which were yet in use for productive purposes. In 1960 there was need for economic retrenchment, enforced by the International Monetary Fund in return for financial backing, which brought the economy to virtual stagnation until early 1964. The country had proved unable to adjust the rate of economic growth to the creation of real domestic resources,[24] a situation that recurred several times later, without the

[24] Penrose, *Iraq*, p. 479. Professor E.T. Penrose makes the point that "fundamental weaknesses remained . . . The constraint on the size of the plan was clearly the money expected to be available rather than the rate at which available real resources could be effectively organized in production."

For Iran, in much the same position during the 1950s as that described for Iraq at a later date, the gap between stated objectives and the availability of resources to effect them was too large to overcome.

government having learned any lessons from it. The most disastrous manifestation of the problem occurred after 1973 and the inflow of increased oil revenues following the oil price increments of 1973 and 1974.

Events from 1964–5 indicated that Iran had great powers of recovery. They also proved that the country was capable of sustaining a steady course of economic development, since progress in this area went on until 1973. The great period of economic expansion after 1964 covered two plans, the third plan (1963–8) and the fourth plan (1968–73). In fact, the plans themselves were in many ways less important than a parallel range of objectives set for the economy by the Shah's "White Revolution", especially in the mid 1960s when the six-point reform programme had a deep impact on both the economy and society in Iran. Additionally there were many projects for the economy that were arranged outside the formal framework of the economic plans in a series of *ad hoc* schemes that began with the deal with the USSR, signed in 1965, and which persuaded the government that the state had to be the innovator for projects developing the heavy industrial base if rapid change was to be achieved. Some successes were also scored in encouraging private sector involvement in development, mainly through provision of cheap and plentiful credits.

The strategy of the government under the influence, among others, of those at the head of the Ministry of Economy, became to pursue economic growth as rapidly as possible, with the sole caveat that each project fitted within the priorities of the national plan. A number of those in power were strongly of the belief that Iran had to accept its opportunities to industrialize unreservedly while it had the chance to do so. For much of the period, however, there was a degree of constraint placed on the speed of development, since the availability of funds was linked to sales of oil in a competitive international market and external financial credits were forthcoming from suppliers only after cautious assessment of each project. Given this inhibition on the pace of development, the human resources and physical infrastructure were improved to carry added burdens of growth more or less in line with the rate of economic change.

Strategies adopted in the 1964–73 period were largely successful. Basic industries were built up and the private sector followed with the establishment of new factories. Development activities spread to most regions of the country. Banking, insurance and commercial services became important features of the main urban settlements. Only agriculture lagged seriously behind changes elsewhere. In agriculture there was no sustained strategy, only a series of ministers often without a grasp of the real needs of the sector. Confidence waned, labour moved away from agricultural employment and production was

virtually stagnant. Growing needs for imports of food and agricultural raw materials were apparent. Despite this problem area of the economy, the government was able to stimulate growth of national income and per capita incomes in a way that had no precedent in Iran. By 1973, Iran was industrializing rapidly, had few problems with domestic price inflation, enjoyed great economic confidence and had reasonable prospects of becoming an economy mature enough to exist in some prosperity even after oil exports ended.

The strategy of the years 1964–73 was sustained after the boom in oil revenues at the end of that year. Unfortunately, government spending on other areas was also expanded almost without constraint. What had been an appropriate policy under conditions of relative capital scarcity became disastrous in a situation of capital abundance. Government attempts to adjust economic strategies after 1973 brought in their wake hyperinflation, overheating of the economy and failure of an overburdened infrastructure.

An attempt by the Āmūzgār (Amouzegar) government in 1978 to stabilize the economy came too late. By this time, it was known that at least two years of economic retrenchment were needed before incomes and employment could be expanded. In the event, the régime was simply unable to hold its line against a nation whose aspirations had been raised, whose social structure had been much damaged and which was suffering from economic distress among its poorer groups. Economic concessions to the population by way of wage increases in 1978 were inadequate to save the situation and tended to worsen economic problems rather than improve them.

NATIONAL INCOME 1941–79

Performance of national income is poorly documented and is especially unreliable in the period before 1962. It is accepted however, that the years of the Second World War brought a sharp decline in Gross National Product in real terms. Bharier estimated that gross domestic fixed capital formation dropped from Rs.10,000 million in 1941 to 8,900 million in 1944.[25] The situation recovered after 1945 but a further period of stagnation affected the economy during the years 1951–3. Capital formation between 1954 and 1959 was strong (Table 1), the total for 1959 rising to Rs.76,800 million. As the recession in economic life set in towards the close of the 1950s, the rate of fixed capital formation declined.

Bank Markazi (Central Bank) of Iran estimates of national income begin from

[25] Bharier, pp. 50–1.

Table 1. *Gross domestic fixed capital formation 1941–63*

Year	Rs. million Current market prices	Constant market prices of 1965	Current factor cost
1941	2,100	10,000	1,900
1942	4,300	10,900	4,000
1943	5,100	8,500	4,600
1944	5,500	8,900	5,000
1945	5,900	9,900	5,400
1946	11,100	19,500	10,100
1947	11,500	19,000	10,400
1948	13,700	20,500	12,400
1949	14,700	24,500	13,400
1950	13,200	24,000	12,000
1951	13,600	23,700	12,300
1952	13,800	23,200	11,600
1953	18,100	24,400	15,000
1954	25,500	29,200	20,500
1955	34,100	39,800	27,500
1956	40,500	39,800	27,500
1957	46,200	50,300	42,000
1958	59,600	65,400	54,400
1959	71,500	76,800	65,600
1960	71,300	75,600	64,900
1961	66,300	71,300	60,400
1962	62,400	66,600	56,900
1963	56,300	60,100	51,100

Source: Bharier, *Economic development in Iran*, pp. 50–1.

1959 and indicate that Gross Domestic Product stood at Rs.275,778 million ($3,696 million) in 1959 at current prices. United Nations sources[26] show that national expenditure rose through the late 1950s from $2,160 million in 1955 to $2,490 million in 1957 at prices of 1955. By the end of the period of economic expansion, 1958/9, Gross National Product at current prices was calculated at Rs.257,845 million. Agriculture still dominated the economy, contributing 26.5% of Gross Domestic Product. Trade and industry (excluding oil) exceeded the petroleum sector in importance (Table 2), suggesting both that economic and political upsets during the 1950s had held back development of the economy and that, in spite of the boom in activity from 1955 to 1959, the country remained structurally immature.

[26] United Nations, *Economic Development in the Middle East 1956–57*, New York, 1958.

Table 2. *Industrial origin of gross national product 1958–9*

Sector	Current market prices Rs. mn.	Percent of total
Agriculture/forestry	68,353	26.51
Fisheries	195	0.08
Mining/quarrying	2,161	0.84
Industry (excl. oil)	41,383	16.05
Oil (net)	27,454	10.65
Electricity	1,250	0.48
Transport/communications	14,202	5.51
Trade	37,815	14.66
Construction	15,000	5.82
Rental	16,133	6.26
Government	19,503	7.56
Bank and insurance	5,146	1.99
Services	9,250	3.59
Gross National Product	257,845	100.00
Less: Capital consumption	25,784	
National Income	232,061	
Gross National Product	257,845	
Taxes & dividends paid abroad	17,933	
Gross Domestic Product	275,778	

Source: Central Bank of Iran.

The decade 1964 to 1973 witnessed a consistent expansion of the economy without parallel in contemporary Iranian history. By the end of the period Iran was not among the ranks of states with highly developed economies, but it had moved perceptibly along the road towards that objective. It structural terms, in 1973 the country was quite different from what it had been in 1964. In particular, the agricultural sector declined appreciably as other activities grew in importance, especially the industrial and services sectors. Absolute and comparative changes in the contributions to Gross Domestic Product are shown in Table 3.

Even under relatively stable economic management during this period, the country was experiencing difficulties in maintaining growth in its main productive sectors – agriculture and industry – adequate to offset rapid growth in services and petroleum. It would be difficult to argue the case that Iran was anything other than an oil-based economy in 1972/3, though its efforts to develop non-oil resources had kept the country from becoming wholly dominated by exports of one commodity. Within the Middle East, Iran was moving

Table 3.1. *The changing contributions to gross domestic product 1963–8*

	Constant price series 1963/4		1967/8	
	Rs.bn.	per cent	Rs.bn.	per cent
Agriculture	89.9	25.8	110.8	21.5
Oil	73.9	21.2	127.3	24.7
Industry/mining	61.7	17.7	103.7	20.1
Services	122.6	35.3	173.7	33.7
GDP at factor cost	348.1	100.0	515.5	100.0

Table 3.2. *The changing contributions to gross domestic product 1968–73*

	Constant price series 1968/9		1972/3	
	Rs.bn.	per cent	Rs.bn.	per cent
Agriculture	119.7	22.0	134.4	15.7
Oil	92.4	17.0	163.7	19.1
Industry/mining	119.8	22.0	195.9	22.8
Services	212.0	39.0	363.9	42.4
GDP at factor cost	543.9	100.0	857.9	100.0

Table 3.3. *Growth rates of gross national product 1963–73*

	Per cent 1963/4–1967/8[a]	1968/9–1972/3[b]
Agriculture	3.4	3.9
Oil	13.2	15.2
Industries/mining	14.0	13.0
Services	9.1	14.2
GNP	9.5	11.8

Notes: [a] Constant prices of 1338: [b] Constant prices of 1346

Sources: Central Bank of Iran, *Annual Reports*; IMF *International Financial Statistics.*

towards parity with Egypt and Turkey in ownership of industrial capacity and, of the Gulf oil exporting states, had been most successful in creating alternative productive assets.

Growth rates in the economy attained over the decade to 1972/3 were high (Table 3.3). Gross National Product grew on average by 9.5% annually in the period 1963/4 to 1967/8, rising to 11.8 per cent in the five years to March 1973. Agriculture performed badly, partly for structural reasons associated with

agriculture world wide, but also as a result of inconsistent government policies. The official figures of 3.4 per cent annual average change for 1963/4–1967/8 and 3.9 per cent for 1968/9–1972/3 rather overstate real advances in agriculture.[27] Other areas of the economy performed well over the decade, giving some encouragement to the view that a future economy less rather than more reliant on petroleum exports was feasible in Iran.

Patterns of change noted above were reflected in rising personal incomes for many Iranians. Calculations indicate that per capita income rose from approximately $130 in 1959/60 to $180 in 1963, thereafter going up to $265 in 1968.[28] Estimates of income per head in 1972/3 vary according to source, though the Central Bank put the average at $566, more than four times the level ten years earlier.[29] There was maldistribution of income between the richer urban areas, especially Tehran, and poorer rural areas, arising from an increasing imbalance between agricultural wages and wages paid in other sectors. While it is true that a number of politically influential families were enhancing their financial positions, it is a fact that the mass of Iranians, including a proportion at village level, experienced improving living standards.

Distinct discontinuity occurred in the structure of and growth rate in national income after 1973, occasioned by a rapid rise in oil revenues following the Arab-Israeli war of 1973. So rapid was growth of the oil sector and services closely related to it, that petroleum came to dominate the Iranian economy. This exaggerated the adverse features of the economic structure previously present and negated any positive aspects that might have existed. Expenditures by the government advanced at so brisk a pace that growth was principally stimulated by the oil sector and it virtually ceased to reflect trends elsewhere in the economy. Estimates of change in national income are shown in Table 4.

As a consequence of events after 1973, agriculture became all but eclipsed as a contributor to Gross Domestic Product. By 1977/8 it represented less than ten per cent of the total. Industry performed a little better, with the group as a whole returning about 20% participation in GDP by 1977/8. Manufacturing industry, which had added 16.1% to GDP in 1972/3 dropped to 13.1% by 1977/8. The productive sectors of the economy provided only a quarter of total domestic goods and commercial services by 1977/8, by which time the economy had become more oil dependent than at any previous time.

Significantly, despite very high growth rates in the economy during the years following the oil boom of 1973, performance at some 6.9% average change over

[27] Central Bank of Iran, *Annual Report*, 1967/8. [28] *Ibid.*
[29] Central Bank of Iran, *Annual Report*, 1972/3.

Table 4. *Trends in gross domestic product 1973/4–1977/8*

	Constant prices of 1974/5				
	1973/4		1977/8		Average annual rate of change
	Rs bn	per cent	Rs bn	per cent	
Agriculture	286.5	10.0	339.0	9.4	4.6
Oil	1,450.6	50.5	1,284.9	35.8	−0.7
Industry/mining	387.7	13.5	684.3	19.1	15.5
Services	749.6	26.0	1,281.3	35.7	15.3
Gross Domestic Product	2,874.4	100.0	3,589.1	100.0	6.9

Source: Central Bank of Iran, *Annual Report* 1977/78

the five-year period was poor compared with that experienced in the preceding decade. National accounts data suggest that uncontrolled rates of expenditure by the state and erratic performance of the Iranian economy during the mid 1970s contrasted unfavourably with the consistency of the earlier plan periods. Although growth until 1972 had been achieved without accompanying trends towards increasing inflation, after that time inflation became serious and damaging. Official statistics (Table 5) tend to under-state this situation.[30]

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES 1941–9

After World War II the first steps were made to change the situation in which oil revenues made little impact on the economic development of the country. Before 1945 income on account of oil was channelled to defence and ordinary budgets. During the reign of Riżā Shāh the need and scope available for productive investment had been perceived but only modest successes had been achieved. During the political turmoil of the post-war years, there was a change in government approaches to oil revenues, brought on by growing nationalism and resentment of foreign exploitation. Gradually, also, it was appreciated that petroleum and natural gas were diminishing resources. The oil industry was nationalized in 1951 but, once political order had been restored following the Anglo-Iranian oil dispute which arose from nationalization, governments increasingly addressed themselves to using oil revenues to create productive capacity in sectors other than oil. The vehicle utilized for translating oil receipts to use in the domestic economy was national economic planning.

[30] Central Bank of Iran, price indices, published in the bank's *Bulletins* on a monthly basis.

Table 5. *Trends in prices 1964–78*

End of year	1975 = 100 1964	1968	1974	1978
Wholesale prices	58.2	60.0	92.6	140.4
Consumer prices	58.2	60.5	88.7	158.2

Source: Central Bank of Iran, *Annual Reports*; IMF, *International Financial Statistics*; Economist Intelligence Unit, Iran.

Formal economic planning was facilitated by the nature of the Iranian oil industry, which was export-oriented and which earned taxes and royalties that accrued into the hands of the state. The government, therefore, carried responsibility for allocation of oil receipts for the national benefit and could dictate that funds be allocated to investment rather than to consumption. Particularly from 1956, after which oil revenues began to flow in on a large scale, the government of Iran found it convenient and necessary to spread benefits of oil income among the population through planned development.[31] Hence, analysis of development in the years 1941–79 is mainly a review of the achievements or failures of successive administrations in formulating and implementing budgets and programmes of the plan. Iranian policies towards economic and social development can be understood only within the context of the Shah's political requirements for maximization of economic growth, as a means of vindicating the gathering of effective political power into his own hands and the exclusion of all others from positions of real authority. The rôle chosen for the formal organization of the plan by the Shah varied from time to time,[32] though the broad guidelines of the plans tended, even if incompletely, to prevail during the period to 1973.

THE ECONOMIC PLANS

The first seven-year development plan was begun in 1949. The plan was originally prepared by the American company Morrison-Knudsen in 1947 but it was modified by Overseas Consultants Inc. before being officially accepted by the Majlis in 1949. Expenditures under the plan were set at a total of Rs.26,300 million ($350 million) gross or Rs.21,000 million ($280 million) net. These were

[31] Imperial Government of Iran, *Fourth National Development Plan*, Tehran, 1968.
[32] McLachlan, "The Iranian economy 1960–76", pp. 138–9.

to be financed by oil revenues and loans from Bank Melli and the World Bank (IBRD). Government factories and mines were transferred to a new agency that was set up to manage the plan (Plan Organization). In the event, the planning processes had been begun but few projects put in hand by 1951, from which time political crisis terminated allocation of funds for the plan.

After settlement of the dispute with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, the work of the Plan Organization was resumed with an interim plan, followed by a second seven-year plan ending in September 1962. A total of Rs.70,000 million ($935 million) was allotted to the plan, a sum increased to Rs.84,000 million ($1,120 million) in 1956. The second plan was similar in many ways to the first. There were no quantitative growth targets and it provided for the public sector only. Funds were drawn from oil revenues, IBRD loans and domestic credit. The plan did make a contribution to economic development and stimulated a degree of private sector industrial development. Unfortunately, the rapid growth which characterized the period resulted in balance of payments difficulties and price inflation. This situation was corrected by imposition of a severe economic stabilization programme, which itself undermined confidence in the private sector and helped to bring on a general economic recession.

Specialists from Harvard University, financed by the Ford Foundation, were recruited to assist formulation of a third plan. This new plan was comprehensive, covering both public and private sectors. It provided for public sector investments of Rs.191,000 million ($2,500 million) and Rs.141,000 million ($1,900 million) for the private sector in the period 1963–8. Disbursements were Rs.230,000 million, priority being given to transport and communications with 26% of funds spent, agriculture with 23% and fuel/power with 16%. Despite a slow beginning made to the plan, with almost two and a half years affected by recession, allocations were later raised considerably and 89% of forecast expenditures were made (Table 6).

Major projects begun under the second plan were the reservoir dams on the Karaj, Diz and Safīd Rūd rivers, which dominated the construction programme in the plan and were not completed by the end of the period. A number of other projects, mostly in industry, were postponed and retained for the succeeding plan period.

The fourth plan began in an atmosphere of optimism in view of the success of the third plan and a promise of rising oil revenues.[33] It was forecast that allocations of government funds to development would be concentrated in the

[33] Imperial government of Iran, *op. cit.*

Table 6. *Planned and actual expenditures of the Third Plan*

	(Rs. billion) Estimate	% of total	Actual
Agriculture/irrigation	49.0	21.3	47.3
Mines/industry	28.6	12.4	17.1
Power/fuel	36.5	15.9	32.0
Transport/communications	59.5	25.9	53.8
Education	18.1	7.9	17.5
Health	13.5	5.9	13.2
Manpower/training	3.2	1.4	2.8
Urban development	7.5	3.2	7.2
Statistics	1.7	0.7	1.5
Housing	12.4	5.4	12.2
Total	230.0	100.0	204.6

Note: $1.00 = 75.75 rials

Source: Central Bank of Iran, *Annual Reports*.

years 1968/9 to 1972/3, with emphasis on development of infrastructure and industry. A special rôle was foreseen for the private sector in industrial development, which increasingly emerged as one of the most favoured areas. Oil revenues rose more quickly than forecast and funds available to the plan were augmented. The completion of major irrigation projects begun earlier and the inception of new schemes in industry, including the Iṣfahān steel mill, a petrochemical unit, an automobile assembly plant and an aluminium smelter, generated a mood of growing confidence in the capability of the régime, both at home and abroad. The relative balance between sectors and a close if coincidental correlation between the pace of economic expansion and the training of the workforce, provision of inputs such as water and power, and development of the Civil Service resulted in steadily accelerating rates of change without undue price inflation or social disruption. The fourth plan was an economic threshold in other ways: the government took over the leading rôle as investor from the private sector. From more than 70% in 1960 and 55% in 1966, the share of private sector investment dropped to less than 45% during the fourth plan period.

Stress on agricultural development of the country, which had characterized earlier development plans, was replaced by preoccupation with industry and construction of infrastructure designed to support industrial expansion.

In balance, mode of execution and results, the fourth plan was one of great

achievement. None the less, the rush to development was perceptibly losing momentum by 1972.[34] New and significant projects were no longer being brought forward. Inflation was rising in urban areas to embarrassing proportions.[35] Pressure on labour supplies was pushing up wage rates rapidly. More importantly, the Shah, having achieved some economic gains, was tending to turn his attention away from the problems of the economy to oil affairs, foreign policy and defence. In 1973, when the most critical of decisions affecting the economy were made, he appeared to be lacking in interest in this area.

Iran's economic development programmes were devised by the Plan Organization. It suffered a decrease in political authority during the late 1960s, and was thereafter often ignored by the ruler and his ministers. Economic planning had an especially uneasy history since the Shah had his own views on the rôle of the national economy and altogether disregarded the plan where it conflicted with his programmes. It is also a truism of the years after 1954, and particularly from 1964, that plans and their rates of economic change were dictated by changes in the flow of oil revenues. That the overall trend in oil revenues was upwards could be tolerated by the economy since, prior to 1973, all increases in oil revenues were on a relatively modest scale.

Directions in the course of economic change in the period after 1962/3 were determined not only by the economic plans but by the Shah's reform programme – the *Inqilāb-i Safīd* ("White Revolution")[36] – which became the guideline for the cabinet under Mr Huvaida. In effect, the third development plan, 1963–8, was put aside to make way for the land reform. The fourth plan, too, was modified over its course by the growing list of items within the Shah's programme.

A first and significant step by the Shah to impose his own will on the economy came in 1962 when land reform was promulgated. After an uncertain beginning, the Shah took over the land reform as a means of political reform that allowed him to take power from the landlord class while mobilizing support for himself in rural areas. In 1963 the Shah made use of the success of the land reform, which had created a positive impact abroad, by adding five further points to his programme – workers' profit-sharing, nationalization of forests and pastures, creation of a literacy corps, sale of state-owned factories, and enfranchisement of women. The reforms affected the heart of Iranian economic and social life. They were seen as so significant that sacrifice of the supremacy of

[34] Bharier, p. 265. [35] International Monetary Fund, *International Financial Statistics*.

[36] The White Revolution was described in glowing terms early in its lifetime, see Zarnegar, *The Revolutionizing of Iran*.

the plan was totally justified by the results of the programme. The reform was later extended and took in a number of points which were less basic, even irrelevant to ordinary Iranians, and the reform became much devalued.

By the late 1960s the régime appeared content that it had done enough to provide for continuing economic development. The Shah engaged himself in vital areas of petroleum and, with greater dedication, defence. Expenditures on defence rose markedly after 1968. Budgeted allocations to defence rose to $1,185 million in 1972/3, excluding parts of the transport/communications and construction budgets that were in support of the defence sector but not directly attributed to it.

At the beginning of the fifth plan, 1973/4 to 1977/8, it seemed that Iran was well placed for the continuation of the successful industrialization of the preceding plan period.[37] Existing rates of growth in the economy were already high. Commitment to major new industrial schemes had been made and, in some cases, construction had begun. The Shah's personal espousal of the industrialization drive, marked by signature of the agreement with the USSR in 1965, appeared as if it would begin to yield results during the 1970s. There were continuing problems affecting agriculture, but it was felt that reform of land ownership having been achieved and appropriate institutions for dealing with credit and agricultural extension having been established, the sector would settle down to a productive and regular pattern of development.

The fifth plan became synonymous with economic failure, despite the optimism that surrounded its inception. The original version of the plan, while not without faults in respect of blindness to economic problems appearing at the close of the fourth plan period and disregard of worsening social problems, was a rational approach to sustaining the pace of change and systematically strengthening the productive sectors.[38] Overall growth targets set at 15.4% average per year for Gross Domestic Product were designed to lift GDP to $36,400 million by the end of the period. The pattern of expansion confirmed the direction of change set earlier. Industry and mining were expected to average a rate of 15.3% and agriculture, with misplaced hopefulness, 5.5%. Oil was expected to give a growth rate averaging 11.8% during the five-year period.

Structural changes expected to come from the scheme of investment outlined above were continuations of established trends. Oil and services were forecast to stay dominant in the economy, contributing 38.0 and 26.3%, respectively, to Gross Domestic Product by 1978. Industry at 23.2% and agriculture at 12.5%

[37] Economist Intelligence Unit, QER, *Iran*, No.1, 1973.
[38] Plan Organization, *The Fifth Plan*, Tehran, 1973.

both retained some importance. The plan objectives included keeping inflation at an average of about 4% annually.

The philosophy of the Shah and his senior ministers, strengthened by successes in the fourth plan, was that the tide of opportunity for development of those areas of the economy other than oil had to be taken at the flood. There was a conviction that chances for sustained and controlled development might not appear again before oil exports began to fall as reserves became depleted. Pressing Iran's advantages during the fourth plan worked well and it was taken for granted that the process could be continued despite the emergence of noticeable political dissent from conservatives on the right and radicals on the left, and regardless of the necessity to reduce flows of resources to welfare schemes. The balance in financial allocations of the original fifth plan leaned towards the economic sectors, with some 62% of allocations of a total of $22,700 million dedicated to them. Welfare, including health education, received only 30% of funds, of which half went to education and much of the remainder to housing. It was stressed when the plan was published in 1973 that the Shah wished for larger allotments to welfare. In the event, financial resources were not to remain so constrained as originally thought and, at the first opportunity, the government increased allocations to the social sectors with quite different results from those expected or wanted.

Among difficulties that the fifth plan bore against was a concentration of development in the petroleum and industrial sectors on a small number of large projects. Large resources were committed to the Trans-Iranian Gas Pipeline and to projects for treating and exporting natural gas. Some $1,900 million was claimed by these items. Development of petrochemicals was an extension of the planning strategy of upgrading exports of processed hydrocarbons. By the end of the fourth plan Iran had one of the most sophisticated petrochemicals industries in the Middle East with major complexes at Bandar Shāhpūr, Ābādān, Shīrāz and Khārg Island. The fifth plan saw expansion of existing units and the creation of new large plants by the state, contracts for most of which were either already signed or nearing completion.

Elsewhere, completion of the steel mill close to Iṣfahān, establishment of three iron and steel plants in the south, expansion of the automobile industry and the opening up of Sar Chashma copper field and its facilities absorbed large proportions of available financial resources.

The aggregate effect of these major projects in industry and petroleum was to localize the impact of state investment and to reduce scope for schemes other than small-scale plants handled by the private sector. Constraints imposed by

this strategy adopted by the planners and the dominance of major projects arose partly through limitations on finance, but there was the advantage that shortages of funds tended to restrain implementation of inessential schemes and to act as an automatic regulator, keeping development in approximate step with availability of resources such as labour and elements of physical infrastructure. The view of the planners at the beginning of the fifth plan period appeared to be that employment-creation was a principal function of growth. It was necessary to create approximately 760,000 new industrial jobs during the plan, to inhibit growth of unemployment in the cities.

Whereas the strategies which were adopted in the fifth plan by the government for oil, petrochemicals, natural gas and industry were consistent with a serious philosophy for economic development, the same could not be said for agriculture. The original land reform[39] programme did much to improve conditions for rural peoples. Later extension of the reform, to include amalgamation of traditional villages into single units and establishment of capital-intensive agro-industries, destroyed most of the earlier gains of the reform.[40] The lessons of low growth rates in agriculture during the fourth plan period were not learned and the fifth plan formalized continuing structural change in rural areas, designed to bring agriculture under direct state control. Large farm units were to be set up during the fifth plan and were to receive credits of $3,900 million and investment of $2,200 million. Worse, the plan also provided for a channelling of state funds from education, housing and health budgets into not more than 8,000 rural development poles at the expense of all settlements of less than 250 persons, which were to receive negligible investments, and other rural centres, which were to suffer much reduced financial allocations. State-run co-operatives or farm corporations were to take in 900,000 hectares of traditional farmland, while agro-industries were expected to absorb 400,000 hectares. The effects of these policies were to reduce the confidence of private farmers, particularly of smaller farmers in traditionally cultivated areas, and to accelerate movement off the land by the younger generation. Under the original text of the fifth plan, the programme for concentrating rural populations and increasing productivity might have worked, and a deliberate inducement of movement to urban districts might have been of benefit to industry as a cheap and increasing labour force. In the event, conscious uprooting of the rural population was to lay the foundations for an economic and social tragedy in the period of the oil boom beginning in late 1973.[41]

[39] Lambton, *Persian Land Reform*.
[40] McLachlan, *op. cit.*, p. 164.
[41] Salmanzadeh, *Agricultural Change*.

Table 7. *Original and revised allocations to the Fifth Development Plan 1973–8, by sector*

	Original Allocations			Revised Allocations		
	Rs bn	$ bn	%	Rs bn	$ bn	%
Revenue						
Oil and gas	1,577.4	20.8	47.0	6,628.5	98.2	79.9
Direct taxes	350.5	4.6	10.4	547.0	8.1	6.6
Indirect taxes	438.1	5.8	13.1	668.0	9.9	8.0
Foreign loans	433.4	5.7	12.0	150.0	2.2	1.8
Treasury bonds and bank credits	364.5	4.8	10.8	50.0	0.7	0.5
Miscellaneous	180.1	2.4	5.4	253.0[b]	3.7	3.0
Total	3,344.0	44.1[a]	100.0	8,296.5	122.8	100.0

Expenditures		
Original Allocations	Rs bn	$ bn
Development projects and new permanent expenses of the plan	1,560.0	20.6
Payments of foreign loans	221.7	2.9
Payments on domestic credits	63.9	0.8
Current operating expenses	1,498.4	19.8
Total	3,344.0	44.1

Expenditures		
Revised Allocations	Rs bn	$ bn
Current expenditure	3,393.3	50.2
Public affairs	(452.8)	(6.7)
Defence	(1,968.7)	(29.1)
Social affairs	(754.0)	(11.1)
Economic affairs	(217.8)	(3.2)
Fixed investment	2,848.1	42.2
Repayment of foreign loans	405.0	6.0
Miscellaneous payments	905.0	13.4
Investment abroad	745.1	11.0
Total	8,296.5	122.8

Source: Plan Organization and Kayhan Research Associates, *Iran's Fifth Plan*, Tehran, 1975.
[a]Discrepancies due to rounding
[b]Including Rs 135 bn ($2 bn) revenue from foreign investments and loans.
From Amirsadeghi, H. and R.W. Ferrier (eds.), *Twentieth Century Iran* (London, 1977).

The fifth plan as originally proposed (Table 7) offered the Iranian government severe problems in its implementation. Real resources were scarce. Transport, banking and civil service infrastructures were inadequate to support the ambitious expansion of the economy proposed under its $20,600 million investment programme. Senior members of the Ministry of Finance and Economy, Bank Markazi and cabinet were aware that the country was pressing ahead with development too rapidly for economic and political comfort. Whether views dissenting from those of the disciples of such men as Mr Anṣārī, the Minister of Finance and Economy, were allowed to filter to the Shah is not documented. It is unlikely, in view of the increasingly authoritarian spirit then pervading the court, that serious objections were raised in the Shah's presence to the significant risks involved in the original fifth plan proposals.

In the wake of the 1973 Arab–Israeli war, oil prices rose rapidly, leading to an immediate and appreciable increase in oil revenues received by Iran. Revenue assumptions of the fifth plan were made redundant, and the $22,050 million expected on oil account over the five-year period were received in less than the first two years of the plan. Revenues from oil in 1973/4 ran at $5,066.6 million. They rose in the following year to $18,670.8 million. The Huvaida cabinet held to the original plan for only a short time once oil revenues began to rise. A revised plan was declared on 3 August 1974, in which budget allocations to the plan were raised by 279% to $122,800 million and the forecast rate of growth in national income was raised to 25.9%.[42] Table 7 indicates the degree of change in the revised plan against the original proposals of 1973. Only oil revenues showed real change. On the expenditure side, increases were scheduled for all sectors. Total fixed investment was set at $42,200 million under the terms of the revised plan, of which social affairs took the largest share with $19,060 million, followed by industry and mines with $12,539 million. Agriculture was felt to be incapable of absorbing very much larger funds and was allocated only $4,582 million.

In effect the Shah and the government decided to retain a "big-push" philosophy,[43] that had served so well in the preceding period, and to press on with development regardless of apparent economic and social strains. This was done despite knowledge that the scale of development expenditures was far greater than in the past and that human and other resources would have been stretched to the utmost even under the original plan. The country was already feeling the effects of social dislocation and inflation. In such circumstances the

[42] Kayhan, *Iran's Fifth Plan*, Tehran, 1974. [43] Mabro, *Aspects of economic development*.

revised fifth plan was economically indefensible. Given that the Shah authorized simultaneous increases in welfare budgets, spending on defence and augmented expenditures on government current account, the scene was set for a scale of demand on goods and services which the domestic economy could not supply, and which could not be met from abroad as a consequence of Iran's limited port and transport facilities. In planning terms, the government failed to appreciate that the "big-push" strategy was appropriate in conditions where capital was in short supply and where constraints arising from limited fund availability kept growth generally in step with the supply of supporting resources. This strategy ceased to be relevant once capital became abundant, since then spending could run ahead of provision of other assets and create unbridgeable imbalances between demand for and supply of resources.

The Shah must take much of the blame for economic events after 1973, together with Iranians and foreigners who flattered Iran by supporting an expanding scale of state spending and by confirming the mischievous and mistaken view that Iran was rich in resources and talent.[44] The problem was one not of planning strategy, but of total economic indiscipline. Provisions of the revised fifth plan were abandoned almost completely. Expenditures were increasingly undertaken outside the framework of the plan as the Shah apparently came to believe that he could transform Iran into a state economically the equal of countries of Western Europe, and could encourage a resurgence of Iranian civilization.[45] Political hegemony in the Persian Gulf and an important rôle in the international arena were to be parallel aspirations in this grand plan.

The hastily revised fifth plan took over the major projects of the original but catered for an accelerated pace of implementation. In the atmosphere of expansion of 1974 and 1975, new schemes were added to the development programme, often through the conclusion of bilateral trade agreements with those industrialized states eager to gain access to oil supplies in return for foodstuffs, materials and equipment.[46] These agreements had the effect of raising import levels of consumer goods and of materials for a series of large-scale projects in petrochemicals, nuclear power, and iron and steel. Many of the projects did not materialize and those that did competed for scarce resources and helped to push up wages and prices. It would appear that adoption of grandiose new schemes by the government served to delay completion of projects already in hand and put up the costs of both. In aggregate, the government achieved little more after the oil boom than it would have done under the original fifth plan, but at enor-

[44] Langer, *Iran: Oil Money*. [45] Kheradjou, "Foreign investment in Iran", p. 18.
[46] McLachlan, *op. cit.*, pp. 160–2.

Table 8. *Loan operations of the government and major banks for industry and mining 1970–8*

Rs. billion	1970/1	1971/2	1972/3	1973/4
Bank Markazi Iran	0.270	3.626	8.969	22.337
Industrial Credit Bank	1.287	0.846	2.572	4.189
Industrial and Mining Development Bank of Iran	3.269	4.575	4.815	7.507
Government credits through the specialized Banks (a)	–	–	—	1.750
	1974/5	**1975/6**	**1976/7**	**1977/8**
Bank Markazi Iran	43.243	27.061	–	–
Industrial Credit Bank	7.841	13.749	–	–
Industrial and Mining Development Bank of Iran	12.722	33.619	31.105	37.809
Government credits through the specialized Banks (a)	28.770	20.000	11.000	14.000

Note: (a) Credit allocations under the fifth plan
Source: Bank Markazi Iran, Industrial and Mining Development Bank of Iran.

mously inflated economic and social costs. By the close of the fifth plan period not one new additional petrochemical plant, steel mill or nuclear power station had been completed. The same was true of most projects for industry that were begun or contracted for at the end of the fourth plan.

Expansion affected private industry in the same way. A scramble for profitable development was set in train by rapid growth in disposable income. Established industrial groups such as Behshahr and Iran National increased the scale of their activities and diversified into new fields. Smaller businesses proliferated, aided by generous credits from the banking system and support from foreign suppliers anxious to secure a share of the Iranian market. Official statistics became less reliable after 1973, though it is apparent that private enterprise was encouraged to compete for scarce resources mainly by state agencies in the licensing and credit fields.[47] Credits allotted to private industry and mining in the period 1970–8 by the major banks are given in Table 8.

What was true of industry was true of the economy as a whole. Growth in public expenditures was a stimulus for rapid expansion in domestic demand in the years 1973/4 and 1974/5. The private sector was relatively quiescent in this period in the field of investment, but by 1975/6 it launched itself headlong into industrial investment.[48] Results of the awakening of the private sector included

[47] Central Bank of Iran, *Annual Report*, 1978/9, pp. 18–23.
[48] Industrial and Mining Development Bank of Iran, *Annual Report*, 1354 (1975/6), pp. 17–18.

Table 9. *Main components of demand 1972/3 to 1977/8*

	Constant Prices of 1974/5					
	1972/3	1973/4	1974/5	1975/6	1976/7	1977/8
Public Sector						
Construction	168.1	186.8	228.1	357.4	424.6	426.3
Machinery	43.5	69.5	108.7	114.8	180.0	220.9
Consumption	354.2	427.9	628.3	722.5	796.0	786.0
Private Sector						
Construction	103.0	98.9	113.1	165.3	217.9	233.3
Machinery	95.9	101.4	112.1	286.1	291.9	272.1
Consumption	880.3	1,014.6	1,127.8	1,207.3	1,242.9	1,422.5

Source: Central Bank of Iran, *Annual Report* 1356/1977–8.

Table 10. *OPEC collective terms of trade*

	(Period averages as Index Numbers: 1974 = 100) Oil Prices	Import Prices	Terms of Trade
1970–3	20.8	70.3	29.5
1974	100.0	100.0	100.0
1975	98.4	112.8	87.2
1976	105.7	114.6	92.2
1977	113.9	125.2	91.0
1978	116.6	144.0	81.0

Source: Morgan Guarantee Trust, *World Financial Markets*, 1978.

prolongation of the period of boom, since the government, which had rapidly expanded its consumption in 1973/4 and 1974/5, cut back its demands on resources in 1975/6 only to permit the private sector to take over and provide a renewed push to growth (Table 9). Private demand rose by 45% in 1975/6 against 37% in 1974/5 and 11% in 1972/73 at constant prices.

The flow of oil revenues failed to live up to expectations. Receipts of foreign exchange on account of oil exports rose only gradually, standing at $19,074 million in 1975/6, $20,671 million in 1976/7 and $20,926 million in 1977/8. Revenues from exports of crude oil and natural gas for the period of the fifth plan amounted to $84,270 million against a revised plan forecast of $98,200 million. Worse, the value of revenues was much reduced by the effects of inflation of prices of imported goods. The adverse trend in the terms of trade for oil states, including Iran, is shown in Table 10. By the end of 1978 the terms of trade had moved 23 per cent adversely against OPEC states in contrast to the situation in 1974, though remaining 160% better than in the 1970–3 period.

The combination of falling real oil revenues and worsening price inflation, though particularly the former, persuaded the government to introduce measures to reduce the growth rate. Government consumption was curtailed. Growth in 1975/6 was held at 15% against 47% in the preceding year. In 1976/7 the figure dropped to 8%. Government construction activity was not so easily cut back, peaking at a growth rate of 57% in 1975/6 but remaining at 12% in 1976/7. The latter year saw an, albeit belated, attempt to restrain private activities with imposition of ceilings on bank advances and increases in the bank rate. The impact of these measures was slow to show itself and increases in interest rates and limitations on building licences were necessary in 1977/8, to reduce domestic demand.

With ill-advised optimism, the government stepped up its own expenditures just as private sector activities seemed to be coming under control. In 1977/8 government fixed investment rose by almost 8% in real terms (24% at current prices). Together with the fact that measures against the private sector succeeded only in reducing investment while consumption, especially in construction, continued to expand (by 15 and 7%, respectively), the financial position of the country deteriorated. Public sector dependence on the banking system increased by some 30%. Inflation worsened. Wage rates, even in modern sector industry, began to fall behind the level of prices. Shortages of electricity, water supply, labour, some foodstuffs, cement and other inputs to the construction industry became markedly worse. Overall growth in national income fell to 3.1% in real terms in 1977/8 after many years of sustained high level expansion. The country sustained its balance of payments position only by resort to expensive short-term borrowing abroad.

From 1975/6, when the economy first showed signs of malabsorption of capital inputs and imbalances between supply and demand, until the end of the plan period, the government appeared unable or unwilling to make a realistic diagnosis of the ills of the economy and use fiscal cures for the symptoms of the problems such as it perceived only hesitantly and erratically. Application of non-fiscal measures to reduce inflation and offset economic distress tended to concentrate on the effects rather than causes of the problem. A campaign against profiteering was introduced in July 1975, affecting manufacturers and those in the distributive trades. Rigid price control succeeded in reducing profit margins, led to a fall in investment in new industry in 1976/7 and 1977/8, and had an adverse impact on the confidence of private entrepreneurs. The campaign brought, however, only a brief period of relief from rising prices. As a parallel political concession to Iranians suffering erosion of their standards of living

Table 11. *Trends in the consumer and wholesale price indices 1973–8*
1975 = 100

	End of year stated					
	1973		1974		1975	
	Index	% change	Index	% change	Index	% change
Consumer Prices	77.6	10.0	88.7	14.3	100.0	12.7
Wholesale Prices	79.2	11.2	92.6	16.9	100.0	7.9
	1976		1977		1978	
	Index	% change	Index	% change	Index	% change
Consumer Prices	111.3	11.3	141.7	27.3	158.2	11.6
Wholesale Prices	109.0	10.9	127.7	17.2	140.4	9.9

Source: IMF, *International Financial Statistics*, 1979.

through inflation, it was decreed in June 1975 that shares in private companies, to a minimum of 49% for companies' equity, should be disposed of through the Tehran Stock Exchange or sold directly to workers. Shares in a number of state-owned concerns were similarly dealt with. It was hoped that a redistribution of ownership in modern industry would act as palliative to growing criticism that modernization was benefitting only a few large families. Uneven application of the law was enough to undermine support of industrialists for the régime, but was not enough to stem alienation of many Iranians from the régime's policies, as inflation undercut the existing social structure and created worsening economic distress.

Inflation had resulted from the government's unrestrained pumping of funds into the economy from early 1975. It compounded an already deteriorating rate of domestic inflation and was coincident with a severe bout of inflation worldwide. Half-hearted fiscal controls, which were rarely applied consistently to public and private areas of activity simultaneously, together with draconian price controls, failed to ease the situation. It must be recognized that official statistics under-stated the problem of inflation in Iran,[49] under-estimating the acuteness of it in the capital and other major centres while generally ignoring events in rural areas. High rates of inflation were not new to Iran. During the Second World War and in the late 1950s inflation took place at destructive levels. Yet the period 1963 to 1973 experienced low rates of inflation, the consumer index rising at an annual average of 3.8 to 4.0%. After 1973, though rising prices were apparent even in 1972, inflation gained way, averaging 15.3%

[49] *International Currency Review*, January–February, 1975, p. 62.

each year between 1973 and 1978 according to IMF sources. If official figures are to be believed, two peaks occurred in 1974/5 and in 1977/8 respectively. Wholesale prices grew in line with the consumer price index but at lower levels (Table 11). The degree of failure of the government in controlling inflation is clearly apparent from the data in Table 11.

A death blow to the planning process in Iran came with abandonment of the sixth plan, expected to begin in March 1978. Dr Āmūzgār, who was prime minister in 1977, suspended most of the large-scale schemes of development and introduced an economic stabilization programme that began to bite deeply by the beginning of 1978. During the first year of the sixth plan an annual budget was imposed reducing expenditures on all but vital and productive projects or developments, such as nuclear power stations, favoured by the Shah. Even defence expenditures were reduced, falling from $8,051 million in 1976/7 to $7,970 million in 1977/8 (though still much greater than earlier levels such as $1,999 million in 1973/4). As a result of measures taken by the Āmūzgār administration, inflation began to abate and the over-heating of the economy to lessen, albeit at the expense of diminishing job opportunities and falling real incomes.

Dr Āmūzgār was inhibited from taking the economy more firmly in hand by the unwillingness of the court to reduce its outgoings, especially in the fields of defence and nuclear energy, and by the disarray of the economy as a whole after 1975. Agriculture suffered very badly from the economic boom. It had lost labour on an unprecedented scale as rural peoples responded to higher wage rates and growing job opportunities in the construction and industrial sectors in urban development areas. Wage rates generally moved against agriculture. While agricultural work received a reward of approximately 50 per cent of the average national wage in 1965/66, this ratio had fallen to less than 30 per cent by 1975/6. Despite official claims to the contrary, production from agriculture stagnated or fell after 1973 as demand rose. Iranian imports of agricultural goods rose from $142.5 million in 1968/9 to $926 million in 1974/5 and to $2,550 million in 1977/8.[50] The government had little chance of restoring production from agriculture in the short term and could not enforce return of rural migrants to their villages of origin. Inflexibilities in agriculture had their counterparts in industry. Raw materials, spare parts and skilled labour were in short supply. Costs of operation had risen rapidly while prices were artificially kept down.[51]

[50] US Department of Agriculture, Washington DC, *Statistical Bulletin*, 1980.

[51] Satvatmanesh, *Determinants of Iran's agricultural trade with special reference to cereals and sugar, 1960–75*.

Numbers of successful capitalists, too, had been unnerved by the arbitrary actions of the Shah against their interests in 1975 under the anti-profiteering and share-distribution laws and, as the Iranian economy crumbled, confidence was eroded. A flight of capital began in 1976 and there is evidence (see Table 9) that many factory owners held back from investment and renewal of existing plant from that year. Disruptions caused by scarcities in electricity supply in 1976/7 and 1977/8 created further industrial chaos. By the time that Dr Āmūzgār came to need a rapid expansion in domestic industrial output to save on imports, the confidence and, in some cases, the capability were no longer there.

In order to put the economy back on course and to return to an absorbable level of growth, the Āmūzgār government calculated that it needed at least two years of retrenchment from March 1978. The political costs of the economic stabilization programme were considerable. Sustained inflation, deteriorating real wages, falling numbers of job opportunities and worsening levels of welfare benefits combined to create a measure of economic distress that left Iranians from all social classes disillusioned and with their aspirations in ruins. Maldistribution of income, and corruption (at which, it must be said, most Iranians had connived for years), took on moral and political significance once people were already suffering acute economic distress, or could look forward only to deteriorating standards of living.

The Shah had justified his style of political rule by achieving economic success. This formula worked well till 1975. As economic failures occurred, demonstrated to all by electricity failures across the country, factories closing, villages dying and the important basic necessities becoming difficult to find, so his vindication of benign authoritarianism vanished. By the end of 1977, discontent found open manifestation on the streets and in the factories. From early 1978 strikes and worker obstruction brought the economy of the country into an increasingly parlous state, stimulated a flight of capital of large proportions, and destroyed any chance of economic recovery under the established régime. Attempts by the government to control the economy ended from mid 1978. In many ways the government's ability to manage it was removed as the one critical sector of the economy, petroleum, was affected by strikes in the closing months of 1978. By February 1979 the economic ambitions of the Shah – modernization and prosperity – were in ruins, and the economic achievement of his reign rejected by the mass of his countrymen.

CHAPTER 18

THE IRANIAN OIL INDUSTRY

INTRODUCTION

The oil industry has played a notable rôle in the economy of modern Iran, especially as a source of foreign exchange and as a factor in industrial development. Its major production operations have, however, been confined to the province of Khūzistān in the south west of the country and offshore in the Persian Gulf. Moreover, its impact upon and contribution to the domestic economy should not be exaggerated and needs to be related to the context of the whole national economy. As Dr ʿAlī Amīnī, when prime minister in 1961, reminded his countrymen "the economy of our nation is based primarily on agriculture. The majority of our people are engaged in agricultural activities." As late as 1956 the urban population constituted 30% of the total population whilst that of the rural area was 70%. Twenty years later over half of the population still lived in the countryside. In the mid 1960s the agricultural sector was still providing some 25% of total gross national income.

The most impressive contribution of the oil industry to the national economy has been since the late 1960s, especially 1967–74, when Iran was the leading producer in the Middle East. Production peaked in 1974 at 301.2 million tons, doubling that of 1968 in six years, but declining thereafter by half to 158.1 million tons in 1979, a vast rise and fall in a decade (see Appendix 1). Oil revenues helped to accelerate the pace of industrialization, but the fall in national income experienced when oil revenues began to decline in the late 1970s caused a slowdown in industrial activity and precipitated an economic crisis. This coincided with the damaging effects of an inadequate infrastructure to cope with the massive projects associated with the revised Fifth Year Plan, with serious political consequences.

THE CONCESSIONARY PERIOD

The D'Arcy Concession

Seepages of oil have been known since antiquity in Iran and were noticed by travellers in the 17th century and later.[1] In Achaemenid times bituminous

[1] See Lockhart, "Iranian Petroleum".

deposits were used for the caulking of ships, the bonding of bricks and medicinal purposes, though probably not in use for the sacred Zoroastrian fires. In the mid and later 19th century the first scientific examinations of sites were carried out by W.K. Loftus and Jacques de Morgan.[2] It was the reports of the latter which aroused the interest of Antoine Kitabgi, who had been director of the Iranian Customs Service and was organizer of the Persian exhibition in Paris in 1900. At the end of that year he contacted Edouard Cotte, formerly an intermediary in the granting of the Reuter Concession, and Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, who had been British minister in Tehran 1887–90.[3] Drummond Wolff in turn interested William Knox D'Arcy, an English solicitor, who had returned to London after making a fortune from the Mount Morgan mine in Queensland, Australia. The D'Arcy Concession was thus, in origin, a speculative commercial project promoted on the personal initiative of an Iranian to acquire British capital for concessionary purposes.[4] It was not dissimilar to earlier attempts by Malkum Khān and others in the 1870s to promote industrial enterprise for Iran.[5] Earlier efforts by a Dutch Company, A. Hotz and Co., to search for oil near Bushire and by the Persian Mining Bank, an offshoot of the ill-fated Reuter Concession, to develop the mineral resources of Iran had proved unsuccessful. D'Arcy's rôle was to contribute the necessary finance and provide the appropriate technical expertise. Kitabgi was responsible for facilitating the negotiations in Tehran.

Through his standing in court circles and his friendship with Amīn al-Sulṭān, the Persian prime minister, Kitabgi assisted D'Arcy's emissary, Alfred L. Marriott. It was a time of intense Anglo-Russian rivalry and by omitting the five northern provinces from his proposed concession, D'Arcy hoped to avoid offending Russian susceptibilities. The negotiations with the Shah and members of the Council of Ministers were protracted. Going against his initial instructions, but on the advice of Kitabgi, Marriott offered some financial inducements to the Shah and the concession was eventually signed on 26 May 1901 for sixty years in return for a royalty of 16% of the profits. The views of the Russian Ministers of Finance and Foreign Affairs and their officials in Tehran conflicted about the importance of the proposed concession. In the confusion effective Russian opposition was not mounted until it was too late.

Within a few years the nature of the undertaking changed. Of the three

[2] W.K. Loftus, *Quarterly Journal Geological Society of London* x (1854), pp. 464–7, and xi (1855), pp. 247–344, and de Morgan, "Notes".

[3] See Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, *Rambling Recollections*; for his service in Iran see, Greaves, pp. 120–69.

[4] For the history of the D'Arcy Concession and the first two decades of the Anglo Persian Oil Company, see Ferrier, *History* 1.

[5] Hamid Algar, *Mīrzā Malkum Khān*.

Iranians who stood most to gain from a successful oil discovery, Kitabgi died before he could dominate the operations in Iran, Amīn al-Sulṭān was assassinated and Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh also died. The difficulties of drilling, the inhospitable countryside, the trying climatic conditions, the complete absence of industrial resources and trained workers, the lack of communications and the divided political responsibilities in the areas surveyed caused escalating costs and brought about a financial crisis for D'Arcy, who had never contemplated exploiting the concession by himself. He intended forming a syndicate to discover oil and then float a company to undertake the work from which he would derive dividends. After he had spent some £250,000 and failed to find additional capital, because of the extreme scepticism about the prospects for oil in Iran, from American and French sources and Calouste Gulbenkian, E.G. Pretyman, parliamentary secretary to the Admirality, suggested that D'Arcy should seek short term financial support from the Burmah Oil Company. Burmah was concerned to safeguard its Indian interests in the event of oil being found in adjacent territory.

Inevitably, this enlarged the scope of the venture, giving it an institutional aspect rather than a venture of personal speculation. Besides, in an area where the authority of the central government, which had no effective army, was circumscribed by the autonomy of Shaikh Khazʿal of Muḥummara and the Bakhtiyārī khans, local arrangements had to be concluded.[6] When oil was discovered at Masjid i-Sulaimān on 26 May 1908, the Burmah Oil Company, which by then had the principal interest, created a new organization, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC). This assumed all responsibility for activities in Iran and it had to honour pledges to the local rulers, such as the Agreement of 15 November 1905 with the Bakhtiyārī khans, without whose acquiescence, for example over the provision of guards, operations would have been absolutely impossible. Later, the Iranian government resented this state of affairs and claimed that the Company was imposing its own authority on the country, an allegation which recurred frequently in relations between the Government and the Company.

In some respects the remoteness of the operations in Khūzistān, far from the capital, was an advantage for the Company whilst it was constructing a refinery and accompanying facilities like jetties, roads and housing, and building the 140-mile pipeline with pumping stations from the oilfield to Ābādān. This was an extraordinary achievement, because Ābādān was no more than an uninhabited

[6] Some idea of the prevailing situation can be found in Wilson, *South West Persia*.

and resourceless mud flat island when it was leased from Shaikh Khazʿal on 16 July 1909. Within a few years it was transformed into a self-sufficient, complex industrial site, the creation of a single company in a remote part of the country. Not surprisingly, as the operations developed in magnitude and importance into one of the great industrial feats of modern times, a kind of enclave mentality manifested itself. In the area involved, the monuments of past civilisations were more visible than signs of economic growth, especially as industrialisation was not part of the Iranian scene until the early 20th century.

The newly formed Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC) asserted its entrepreneurial strength without any British government interference. Although the various technical difficulties in commissioning the refinery caused a serious financial crisis, the directors were adamant in preserving their independence and in not associating themselves with any other oil company. By offering supplies of fuel oil on a long-term basis at favourable prices, a contract was secured with the Royal Navy in 1914. This self-confidence resulted in the offer by the Company, finally accepted after two years of prolonged negotiations on the part of the British government, of a majority shareholding in the company, subject to non-involvement of the Government in the Company's commercial activities.[7] It was a financial *mariage de convenance*, not an arranged marriage, but it radically altered the nature of the Company and appeared to identify it with the activities of the British government. Thereafter Iranian governments judged its operations on political rather than commercial criteria. The Company's position was, unfortunately, prejudiced as this relationship became the cause of a suspicion from which no other concessionary company in the Middle East suffered to the same extent.

By 1919, different interpretations arose between the Iranian government and APOC over the respective obligations and responsibilities implicit in the text of the concession, and over other developments which could not have been envisaged in 1901. There were problems related to the protection of the operations, which had been interrupted and damaged by sabotage during the First World War, obliging APOC to claim compensation. There were also differences over the definition of profits. There were disagreements over activities of the Company which were not part of its Persian operations, such as shipping and subsidiary distribution companies. These had to be considered in the light of increasing technical change and expanding market opportunities in which the company was involved. There were Iranian complaints about alleged

[7] Jack, "The Purchase of the British Government's Shares."

inequitable accounting practices and insufficient employment of Iranians. An attempt to solve some of these issues was made through the mediation of Sidney A. (later Sir) Armitage-Smith, financial adviser to the government of Mushīr al-Daula, who had been selected in 1919 by Nuṣrat al-Daula, Prince Fīrūz, Foreign Minister, when he was in London. Prince Fīrūz appointed Sir William McLintock, the eminent Scottish accountant, as consultant.

It was after the assumption of power by Riżā Khān, first as Minister of Defence in 1921, then prime minister in 1923 and finally Shah after December 1925, that these issues were first brought into the open. There was no criticism of the technical activities of APOC in exploration, production or refining. There was, however, Iranian suspicion that APOC was opposing the extension of central authority by supporting Shaikh Khazʿal and the Bakhtiyārī khans, to whom certain British government officials were clearly sympathetic. The oil company was understandably grateful for their earlier protection and co-operation, but it was not in its interest to have a weak, insecure and divided Iran, which was unable to promote the modernization of the country, or to provide the trained personnel that was needed. Wells, rigs, pipelines and installations were vulnerable to unrest in the countryside when the government was weak, which had earlier been the case. As a senior member of the management of APOC expressed it in 1922, "our salvation lies in a strong Central Government . . . it is our common interest to assist a proper central Government, and gradually get rid, on the one hand, of the suspicion that we are out to partition Persia, and on the other, of the belief entertained by local elements that we should support them against any Central authority desirous of putting its house in order".[8]

Sir John Cadman, Deputy Chairman and later Chairman, wished to initiate a frank and friendly dialogue with the Iranian government after Riżā Shāh's coronation in April 1926. He hoped for a new and mutually beneficial relationship. International competition was increasing as rising consumer demands stimulated the consumption of oil products. The discovery of new areas of production in South America, particularly Venezuela, and in the United States, expanded the supply of crude oil closer than Iran to the principal world markets. Instead of concessional uncertainty, Cadman wanted a secure base of trust upon which preparations could be made for greater investment in new fields, new refining capacity and new marketing outlets to increase both profitability and revenue. In pursuit of this policy, at talks in Lausanne with Mīrzā ʿAbd al-

[8] On British relations with Shaikh Khazʿal and Riżā Khān at this time, see Gordon Waterfield, *Professional Diplomat*.

Ḥusain Tīmūrtāsh, Minister of Court, in August 1928 and negotiations in Tehran in March and April 1929, Cadman offered the Iranian government a remarkable shareholding partnership in the company, by which it would have been enabled to participate directly in the Company's commercial prosperity. He proposed a 20% holding of ordinary shares in addition to royalty on tonnage, and requested a prolongation of the duration of the concession.

It was a proposition far in advance of its time, but the Iranian negotiators were divided on its significance and wanted a larger immediate return on oil production rather than trusting to potentially better future revenue prospects. The Iranian government wanted money on current account to implement a programme of modernization, which was already incurring large expenditure, in order to obviate the need to raise foreign loans to which the Shah was strongly opposed. It was an understandable dilemma but caution was preferred.[9] The increased goodwill that could have been gained by the acceptance of the offer was lost by its rejection. Meanwhile the impact of the world depression, with falling oil consumption and profits, lowered rather than increased the level of possible terms for a settlement on the old profit basis. The increasing financial demands of Riżā Shāh's modernization programme exacerbated the foreign exchange requirements of the Iranian government, making a compromise less easy to attain.

This time of economic crisis coincided with political unease as disturbances took place in the country. In 1929, Khūzistān, centre of APOC's activities, was threatened by strikes and tribal unrest for the suppression of which armed force was needed.[10] The heads of ministers, such as Prince Fīrūz, then Minister of Finance, rolled. In fact, the company's operations were only threatened for one day in early May and, because of the loyalty of its staff and workers, never ceased working. Russian trade embargoes added to commercial discontent and uncertainty. The working of the Iranian Trade Monopoly bill, a measure of Tīmūrtāsh, to control the import and export trade, was hard to administer. The taxation of primary products like sugar and tobacco to finance expenditure on the railways was resented. An aggressive diplomatic policy was launched in the Persian Gulf in opposition to Iraq, and Iranian claims to Baḥrain were revived. Orders were placed for a navy to be constructed in Italian shipyards. The Shah became suspicious of the competence and allegiance of Tīmūrtāsh, to whom he was so much indebted.[11]

[9] For an interesting view on these events at which he was present and for other interesting information, see Fātiḥ, *Panjāh Sāl-i Naft*.

[10] See Floor, *Industrialization*, and *idem.*, *Labour Unions*.

[11] On Tīmūrtāsh the most recent study is to be found in Miron Rezun, *The Soviet Union and Iran*.

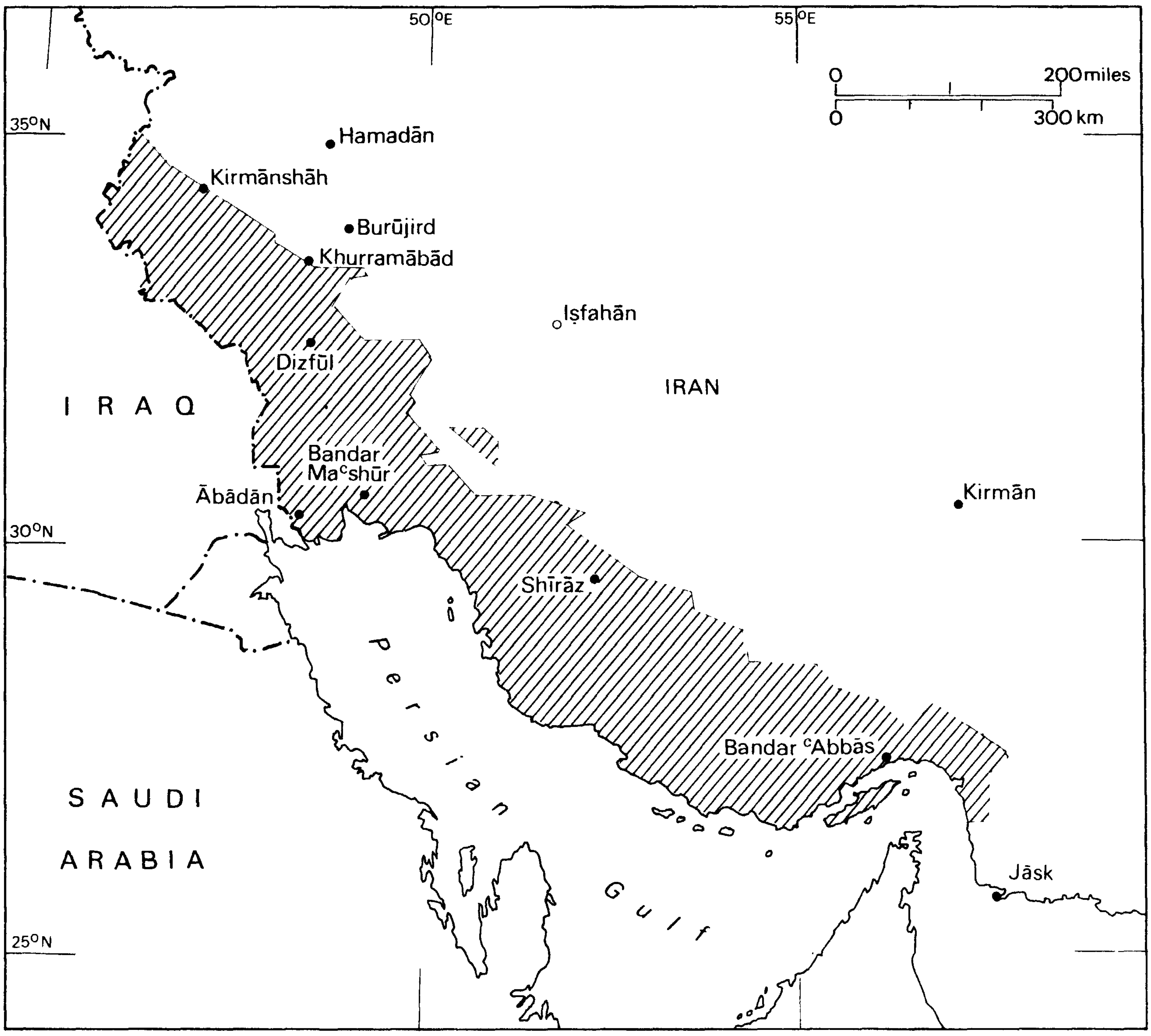
In this tense climate of recrimination and adversity as the Iranian ministers struggled with an ambitious programme of modernization, including the Trans-Iranian railway, the acquisition of a navy and the establishment of new factories, the royalty payments fell disastrously for 1931 to £306,872 on 5,750,498 tons of oil, the lowest amount since 1917 when they were £146,734 on 644,074 tons. It was almost 20% of what it had been in 1929, £1,436,764, but in the final settlement of 1933 the royalty payments for 1931 were made up to a figure comparable to the previous year (see Appendix 2). An enraged Riżā Shāh, furious with his ministers and appalled at the assumed duplicity of APOC, cancelled the concession on 27 November 1932. He tried to wipe the concessionary slate clean, but recognizing that he could not manage the Iranian oil industry without the assistance of the Company, he was determined to bargain for the best terms with the leverage he believed he had gained.[12]

In the diplomatic moves which followed, the British government took the case to the Council of the League of Nations, under whose aegis negotiations were resumed in Tehran. A settlement was reached, regarded by some Iranians as a betrayal, because of the Shah's intemperate action but which, in the economic and political circumstances of the time, resulted in not an ideal but a practical agreement, which became known as the 1933 Concession. Sayyid Ḥasan Taqīzāda's allegations in January 1949 that the agreement had been reached under duress were an attempt to exculpate himself, as the principal Iranian negotiator after the dismissal of Tīmūrtāsh, from criticism. In fact all the main Iranian oil negotiators were subsequently censured for allegedly failing to defend their country's interests; Amīn al-Sulṭān, 1901, Taqīzāda, 1933, ʿAbbās Qūli Gulshāyān, 1949, and ʿAlī Amīnī, 1954.

In the 1933 Concession royalty payments were based on tonnage at an official gold exchange rate instead of 16% of profits. Provision was included for participation in the company's profits by the Iranian government to the extent of 20% of dividends declared. The extent of the concessionary area was reduced to 100,000 square miles (see map 12). A definite obligation to increase Iranian and reduce foreign employees was included. A refinery was to be constructed in Kirmānshāh to process the crude oil from the Naft-i Shāh field straddling the Iran–Iraq border, and the concessionary duration was extended by 60 years to 1993.[13] There had been no actual interference with the company's operations

[12] Conflicting analyses of the significance of this negotiated concession can be found in Elwell-Sutton, *Persian Oil*, p. 67; Lenczowski, *Russia and the West*, pp. 80–1; Ramazani, *Foreign Policy*, p. 256; Stobaugh, "Evolution", p. 205.

[13] A useful summary of these terms and much general information about the Anglo-Persian Oil Company is to be found in International Court of Justice, pp. 43–68.



Map 12. AIOC concessionary areas in Iran

during the negotiations, and, though plenty of invective was published in the press, the damage to relations was minor. Rizā Shāh, however, had served notice that along with the abolition of the Capitulations in 1928 he was not prepared to accept economic dependence indefinitely. The timing may have been accidental, perhaps premature, but the intention was perfectly clear.

It is an indication of what had been achieved in almost a quarter of a century that Iran had become the first of the great oil producing countries in the Middle East. Unprecedented well-head pressures and difficult refining problems of sulphurous crude oil had been solved in the development of the Masjid-i Sulaimān field. Research had been undertaken into oil reservoir behaviour and its special characteristics as energy was released when the oil and gas surged to the surface like bubbling froth. Understanding the significance of bottom hole temperatures and oil and water levels resulted in oil field production techniques,

pioneering in their time, which have constituted the "unitisation" basis of modern methods throughout the world. They were first successfully applied at the Haft Kel field, which was discovered in 1927. The superior technical skill applied in the early days of the Iranian oil industry enabled production to be economically maintained with minimal loss of gas pressure and without pumping. It prevented any water-flooding or blow-outs apart from the spectacular fire at Rig 21 in 1951. Multi-stage gas separation plants were developed by 1930 to enhance the recovery of some of the more useful gases and reduce the risk of explosion. Early automated systems were introduced a decade later. The extensive geological surveys conducted in the years 1924–5 led to the prospect of further discoveries at Gach Sārān, Naft Safīd, Lālī, Āghā Jārī and Pāzanūn which were in production in the early forties. Geological, geophysical and topographical surveys identified most of the principal features of the Iranian oil scene.[14]

Employment rose in the industry from 1,706, of whom 1,362 were Iranian in 1910 to the peak year of 1930 with 31,246, of whom 20,095 were Iranian, excluding contract labour and certain minority groups such as Armenians and Arabs living in Khūzistān (see Appendices 3 and 4 for details of numbers and locations of the workforce, 1919–51). Artisan technical training schools were started in 1922 and within a decade covered most trades, gradually diversifying and advancing in scope. It has to be recognized that among the various communities inhabiting Ābādān and working at the refinery there were social reservations and distinctive national characteristics, not only between Iranian and British employees, but also between Iranian, Arab and Indian nationalities. Ābādān was a boom town in the 1920s, lacking many amenities. It was administered inefficiently at first by Shaikh Khazᶜal till 1924, and then for a few years by an inept local authority under weak central government supervision. It was not an attractive place. The climate was humid, hot and oppressive, quite unappealing to Iranians from the north, who, at first, showed little desire to adapt to the industrial discipline inseparable from running a refinery. Those more privileged regarded Khūzistān as a social backwater. Relations between the different communities, while not unfriendly and occasionally close, were generally distant. In statistical terms a production of 80,000 tons in 1912–13 had grown to 5,750,498 tons in 1931. Refinery throughput rose in the same period from 33,000 tons to 4,388,000 tons in 1931, a tremendous increase. The royalties

[14] On geological aspects see Lees "Geology"; Harrison, "Geology", and on industrial aspects see Melamid "Industrial Activities".

reached their peak at £1,436,764 in 1931. By the end of the 1931, from 1913, cumulative tonnage was 56,479,703 tons and the total royalty £11,265,627, an average of 4s.od. a ton.

The 1933 Concession

The signing of the 1933 Concession coincided with the ending of the worst effects of the depression and the beginning of a recovery in the world economy. This was reflected in a growing demand for oil products, which resulted in Iranian production rising from 6,445,808 tons in 1932 to a peak of 10,195,371 tons in 1938. At that rate its increase was proportionately higher than that of the rest of the world (see fig. 1). Refinery throughput also increased, the quality of products improved and their range widened as new processes were devised. Geological exploration and aerial reconnaissances undertaken in the 1930s over most of the area produced a mineral and topographical survey of potential value and accuracy then unparalleled elsewhere in the Middle East. It was a period of considerable improvement in medical care, housing, welfare, education and training. Revenues to the Iranian government increased from £1,525,383 in 1932 to £4,270,814 in 1939. In 1936 agreement was reached on a General Plan in accordance with Article 16 of the 1933 Concession. The apparent slowness of the Iranianization programme was later resented by government officials, but, given the generally low level of Iranian technical education, the actual reduction in foreign technicians and their replacement by Iranians were not unreasonable in a highly technical industry (see table 1). Moreover, at that time most educated Iranians had a predeliction for the pen and the office rather than the spanner and the bench. According to the International Labour Office in 1950, "There is no reluctance on the part of the Company to recruit and promote Iranians . . . positions are open to all who acquire the necessary qualifications and experience."[15] (For the gradual replacement of foreigners by Iranians over a ten year period, see table 2). The institution of scholarships and training courses for Iranian students in England, especially at Birmingham University, brought Iranians into technical positions in the service of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC), as it became known in 1936 when *Īrān* became the official name of the country in international use, instead of Persia.

The inauguration of the Ābādān Institute of Technology in 1939 under an Iranian Principal, Dr Riżā Fallāḥ, who was the son of a mulla from Kāshān and

[15] *Labour Conditions in the Oil Industry in Iran* (I.L.O. Geneva, 1950), p. 72.

Table 1. *Numbers of foreign and Iranian employees in 1934 and 1950*

	Management and Senior Staff		*Junior Staff*		*Artisans and other Skilled Labour*		*Semi-skilled Labour and Domestics*		*Totals*	
	Iranian	Foreign	Iranian	Foreign	Iranian	Foreign	Iranian	Foreign	Iranian	Foreign
1934	25	740	702	379	1,759	412	4,688	268	7,174	1,799
1950	941	2,910	4,549	658	17,380	935	20,210	–	43,080	4,503

Source: BP

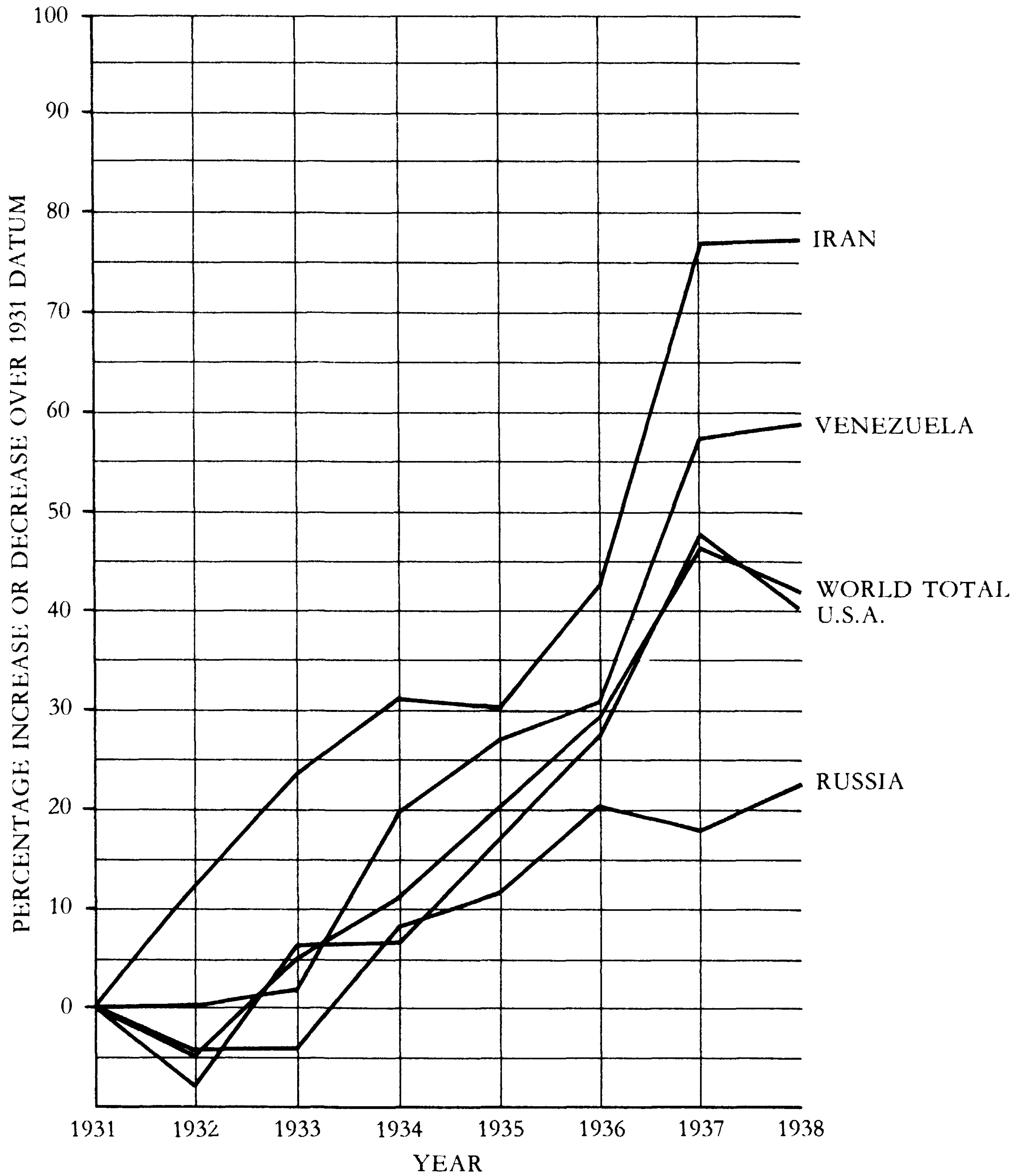


Fig. 1 Graph showing percentage increase or decrease over 1931 in production tonnages.

Table 2. *Replacement of foreigners by Iranians*

Year	Plan Percentage	Actual Percentage Achieved
End 1935	17.25	–
1936	16.63	14.84
1937	16.00	13.63
1938	15.50	14.73
1939	15.00	12.69
1940	14.50	13.41
1941	14.00	11.36
1942	13.75	13.77
1943	13.50[1]	15.12[3]
1944	(13.25)[2]	15.56[3]
1945	(13.00)	14.57[3]
1946	(12.75)	11.84
1947	(12.50)	11.85
1948	(12.25)	11.61
1949	(12.00)	10.92
1950	(11.75)	10.45

[1]Plan ends.
[2]Figures in brackets represent continuation of 1936 General Plan at rate of reduction envisaged for years 1942 and 1943.
[3]High as result of manpower shortage in Iran caused by allied occupation and large construction programme.

Source: BP

had been sent on a company scholarship in petroleum engineering studies to Birmingham University, was a significant contribution to technical training. For many Iranians it was the opening of a career in the oil industry which led to management in AIOC and senior positions after 1951 in the National Iranian Oil Company, formed in that year. In the mid-thirties an Iranian member of staff, Muṣṭafā Fātiḥ, was in charge of APOC's petroleum distribution over most of Iran, which had previously been the exclusive preserve of Russian oil sales. With the increasing modernization of the Iranian economy and the growth of industrialization, oil consumption was rising and the years between 1933 and 1939 were a period of expansion and stability in the Iranian oil industry.[16] Oil revenues contributed to the nation's modernization programme and provided

[16] For a detailed examination of the later period see Ferrier, *History* II; and *idem.*, "The Anglo-Persian Oil Crisis"; Avery, *Modern Iran*; Cottam, *Nationalism*; Bharier, *Economic Development*, especially pp. 150–169; Zabih, *The Communist Movement.*

most of its foreign exchange earnings, apart from the important credit facilities negotiated with the German government, trade with whom was encouraged to lessen dependence on Russian imports and exports.

The relatively calm relations between AIOC and the Iranian government were broken as a result of events in the Second World War. The success of German submarine warfare caused the implementation of a short haul policy over tanker sailings and supplies in order to economize on vessels and reduce voyage times, diverting them from loadings in Middle Eastern ports to those in the United States and South America. Inevitably this changed the pattern of supply and caused a reduction in Iranian oil revenues. Riżā Shāh, arguing that the outbreak of hostilities between Great Britain and Germany was no concern of his, threatened to abrogate the 1933 Concession in July 1940, but finally agreed to a guaranteed fixed payment of £4,000,000 in royalties until the revival of oil exports should bring about a revenue which would exceed this amount, which was arbitrarily based upon that of 1939. He had been expecting an amount of £14,000,000 which would have borne no relationship to market realities, only to his own budgetary requirements.

The security of the refinery and the oil installation during the war was a problem. The entry of British and Russian forces into Iran on 25 August 1941 as a result of the German invasion of Russia and German infiltration into Iran, while it ensured the protection of the operations from ground attack, was not a complete defence from aerial bombardment. The use of Ābādān as a base for supplies to Russia with American assistance was important during the war, no less than the establishment of a vital plant for the production of 100 octane aviation spirit in 1943. Gradually oil demand increased and exceeded that of pre-war production as war activities developed in eastern territories. Iranian opinion was not convinced of the necessity for violating the country's neutrality in 1941, whatever the provocation offered by the pro-German stance of Riżā Shāh. The British government received its share of the criticism for disrupting the Iranian economy and political life. The company too was not immune from such accusations and it was a target of abuse, particularly after the termination of hostilities and the revival of political activity following years of suppression by Riżā Shāh, who abdicated on 16 September 1941 in favour of his eldest son, Muḥammad Riżā, and who died in South Africa in 1944. The entry of allied troops into the country frustrated Iranian national aspirations and caused some among a new politically alert generation to question the political occupation of northern Iran by Russian troops, while others objected to the economic subservience of the southern oil fields to the control of AIOC.

It must not be forgotten that although the D'Arcy Concession was the most successful, it was not the only oil concession or example of foreign interest in its time in Iran. During the First World War, A. Khostaria, an Iranian of Russian origin, was granted a concession on the basis of an even earlier one in northern Iran. It was the subject of much controversy when Khostaria tried later to dispose of it individually to Gulbenkian, the APOC, the Standard Oil Company (NJ) and the Sinclair Oil Corporation in the early 1920s. He was also involved in the Kavīr–Khūriyān Concession of 1925, which, with Russian participation, was interested in the possibility of discovering oil in the Simnān region. Riżā Shāh and Tīmūrtāsh also had personal interests in this project. There was some minor American and Royal Dutch Shell interest at the end of the 1930s.

It was, however, during the Second World War that the possibility of oil discoveries in northern and, to a lesser extent, in southeastern Iran was revived. Two American oil companies and the Royal Dutch-Shell made approaches to the prime minister, Muḥammad Sāʿid in 1943. These overtures were politely accepted, examined by the American oil consultants Herbert Hoover Jnr. and A. Curtis on behalf of the Iranian government, but received a non-committal answer. The American interest and the presence of Herbert Hoover had significance in the longer term for American concern over Iran in the late 1940s and later, particularly over the nationalization issue in 1951 and the composition of the consortium in 1954. The Russian government was seriously concerned over these developments, which conflicted with its political and economic interests in Iran. On 15 September 1944, Sergei Kavtaradze, Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, arrived in Tehran to demand a concession in the north of Iran. Sāʿid pleaded that he was precluded from granting one by a cabinet decision of 2 September prohibiting the offering of oil concessions to foreigners during the war. Russian pressure was intense and Sāʿid was subsequently obliged to resign.

He was succeeded by Murtażā Qulī Khān Bayāt, who was believed to be more amenable to Russian requests, but shortly after taking office, and with his agreement, Dr Muḥammad Muṣaddiq made his first memorable and important intervention in oil affairs by successfully tabling a bill in December 1944, which prevented any member of the Iranian government from concluding any negotiations for oil concessions with any foreigner without reference to the Majlis. The Russians gave way, determined to assert themselves later in more favourable conditions. These occurred in 1946 when Russian troops were still stationed in the north of the country in violation of the Tripartite Treaty of 1942. Āẕarbāījān

was virtually being administered by an autonomous régime under Russian protection, which was asserting itself and acquiring political support in opposing the policies of Muḥammad Riżā Shāh. Qavām al-Salṭana, who became prime minister in January 1946, was determined to preserve the political and economic unity of Iran. He had to reconcile the short term objectives of Russian insistence on an oil concession with the long term objectives of Iranian independence. He temporized by signing an oil concession for fifty years on 4 April in Tehran, after a month-long visit to Moscow in February. Among other provisions, he agreed to the formation of a company, in which the Russian government would hold a 51 per cent shareholding in return for providing all the capital, equipment and senior members of the staff. The agreement, in any event, had to be ratified by the Majlis; this was the crucial point.

Shortly afterwards Russian troops withdrew from Iran. The independent republic of Āẕarbāījān collapsed in the face of a show of strength by the Iranian army towards the end of the year. Qavām completed the discomfiture of the Russians by delaying the submission of the oil agreement to the Majlis until the new session had been convened in October 1947. It was then rejected on 22 October by 102 votes to 2 and an important bill sponsored by Qavām was approved, effectively laying down an Iranian oil policy for the first time, a subject which was of considerable national concern. It proposed:

(1) Iran was to explore and exploit her own oil resources during the next few years with her own capital.
(2) The prime minister's negotiations for an oil agreement with Soviet Russia were to be null and void.
(3) Iran was not to grant any concessions to foreign powers or to have foreign partners or help in oil exploration.
(4) If oil were found in the country within the following 5 years, the government might negotiate with Russia with a view to selling oil to the latter.
(5) In all cases where the rights of the Iranian nation, in respect of the country's national resources, whether underground or otherwise, had been impaired, particularly in regard to the Southern Oil, the government was required to enter into such negotiations and take such measures as were necessary to protect the national rights, and inform the Majlis of the result.

It may have been a statement of principles rather than an immediate practical programme. It may have been part of the traditional balancing act between Russian and British interests as Qavām informed the British ambassador, Sir

John Le Rougetel; Qavām denied that he had any intention whatsoever of suggesting any change in the concession.[17] Qavām had never really trusted the Pahlavī dynasty and the Shah doubted his loyalty, particularly after his notable part in helping to settle the Āẕarbāījān crisis and bring about the evacuation of Russian troops. Preliminary discussions only had been held with the AIOC, before the smouldering antipathy between monarch and prime minister erupted at the beginning of December and Qavām was suddenly dismissed. Polarization of the political situation followed, the middle ground was lost and the moderates were silenced by the passionate partisans of both the Shah and the opposition, each group claiming ultimate sanctity for its own profession of patriotism and its own brand of national policy. It was a political misfortune.

Attempting to keep its political neutrality, AIOC was suspected by both sides of partiality, if not interference in the affairs of the other side. It is essential to understand the dilemma in which the Company was placed in attempting to handle its relations with the Iranian government on a commercial level when the context was fundamentally political. This attitude may have been naive, but it was consistent since Cadman's discussions with Riżā Shāh in 1926 and with Tīmūrtāsh in 1928. The same policy was pursued elsewhere, for example in Italy and Germany in the 1930s. The Company was exposed and vulnerable to criticism because it loomed so large on the Iranian political horizon. It was a scapegoat not only because of its presence and success but also because of its shortcomings. These were sometimes visible, as when strikes occurred in May 1946, which although politically motivated, did also represent grievances over inadequate housing in the then overcrowded Ābādān area, and the high cost of living; but these factors also involved the municipal responsibilities of the Iranian government no less than the moral obligations of the Company.

Indeed one of the main reasons of discontent in Ābādān was the conflict of interest between the Iranian government and AIOC over the welfare amenities and facilities of the town. The Government claimed that Ābādān was entirely dependent on AIOC, for without it it would not have existed, since the origin of its existence was oil. The AIOC was prepared to and did share some of the expenditure, but it considered that the provision of basic services was essentially the responsibility of the Government. The dilemma was never really resolved satisfactorily for the inhabitants. Nevertheless, between 1946 and 1950 AIOC

[17] Public Record Office, FO 371/61976 Le Rougetel to FO, 6 December 1947. Le Rougetel informed the Foreign Office that Qavām was sure that "the Majlis did not intend to initiate any radical revision of Anglo Persian Concession", FO 371/61975 Le Rougetel to FO, 7 November 1947. Similar advice had been given to the Company on 28 October 1947, at the Foreign Office, but it was sceptical, Meeting at Foreign Office, FO 371/61974.

spent some £34.5 million on social amenities, housing, ancillary services, medical and educational buildings, as well as some £2,250,000 on shops, stores, restaurants, and sporting facilities. Health services costing some £2,000,000 in 1950 were provided and included 101 medical officers, 7 dentists, and 130 nursing staff with 853 hospital beds available as well as 35 clinics and dispensaries catering for 12,162 admissions (6,956 employees, 5,206 others) and 1,530,815 attendances (504, 418 employees and 1,026,397 others).

Apart from its own educational schemes, AIOC contributed to the cost of 35 primary and secondary schools in Khūzistān. The Company never claimed that this expenditure was altruism. It was enlightened self-interest, which also contributed to the benefit of the population and on which the ILO mission commented that, "the working and living conditions of the oil workers appear as an encouraging example of what can be done".[18] It was not to be expected that the Company would not be involved in political or social controversies, even disturbances, in the areas of its operations. Occasionally individual incidents of a regrettable kind did occur. Generally relations were good. Investment in Iran was considerable; between 1931 and 1950, for example, some £93 m. was spent on capital expenditure for fixed assets, which would have reverted to Iran on the expiry of the concession, £16 million on mobile assets and £10½ million on drilling wells.

The Company was with reason, over-cautious about its "Iranianization" programme because of a perceived low standard of technical education. It did, however, institute a wide range of training facilities from the early 1920s to compensate for the poor level of educational attainment in Khūzistān. It was, perhaps, in retrospect, excessively worried about the safety of its operations, particularly at the refinery during a time of rapid technological development. Moreover, the unattractiveness of the area to better-educated Iranians from Tehran and the north of the country did not then encourage many of them to seek employment in the hot and humid climate of Ābādān, engaged in work that was not congenial to their temperament, and where opportunities of rapid promotion to senior positions were not commensurate with their expectations of good living conditions and high remuneration. There were more attractive opportunities elsewhere for those interested in industry or government, where the demands for better trained and technically knowledgeable management were growing but in short supply. Nevertheless, whatever the educational inadequacies, the social implications and the prevailing circumstances, the

[18] I.L.O. Report *op. cit.* p. 83. On some labour troubles see Abrahamian, "The Strengths and Weaknesses".

transition from the concessionary to the national period was largely accomplished operationally by those who had been trained by and worked for AIOC, including some who had studied at universities and technical institutes in England.

Besides those who held managerial posts in the oilfields or in the process plants in the refineries, on whose competence the continuity and efficiency of the actual operations relied, there were several other Iranians who achieved more senior positions. These included a later first Secretary-General of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Companies (OPEC), an Assistant General Manager, the highest appointment reached by an Iranian in the company, and a later Deputy Chairman of the National Iranian Oil Company.

When negotiations for an adjustment of the 1933 Concession were being considered in 1947, there was some antagonism towards AIOC and its British affiliations because of Iranian experience during the Second World War. This was combined with excessive Iranian expectations about the possible terms for a new settlement, stimulated by some American encouragement. In the same way anti-foreign sentiment had been mixed with ambitious demands in the earlier negotiations of 1928–33. With hindsight the haggling over details seems insignificant in the context of the explosion of oil demand which took place in the early 1950s and continued at an escalating pace until the late 1970s. Such a development, however, was not apparent in 1948. Many experts were inclined to be more pessimistic than optimistic over the prospects for oil in energy consumption, and were apprehensive about the future demands for energy itself in a depressed post-war world economy. The importance of General Marshall's plan for Europe's economic rehabilitation, proposed in June 1947, had still not been sufficiently taken into account.

Moreover, it has to be recognized that the serious financial situation affecting the United Kingdom in the post-war period was not properly understood and played a part in creating suspicion among Iranian politicians. It was not to be expected that they should be sympathetic, just as it was unreasonable to assume that they should have been appreciative of the motives which led to the allied forces entering their country in 1941. It was understandable, however, that they should have objected to the British government's austere fiscal policy announced in the Budget of 1948, whereby the payment of dividends for 1947 were kept at the level of 1946. Although the Company declared a dividend of 30 per cent for 1947, it had to conform to the Government's dividend stabilization policy, thus reducing the amount which would have been payable to the Iranian

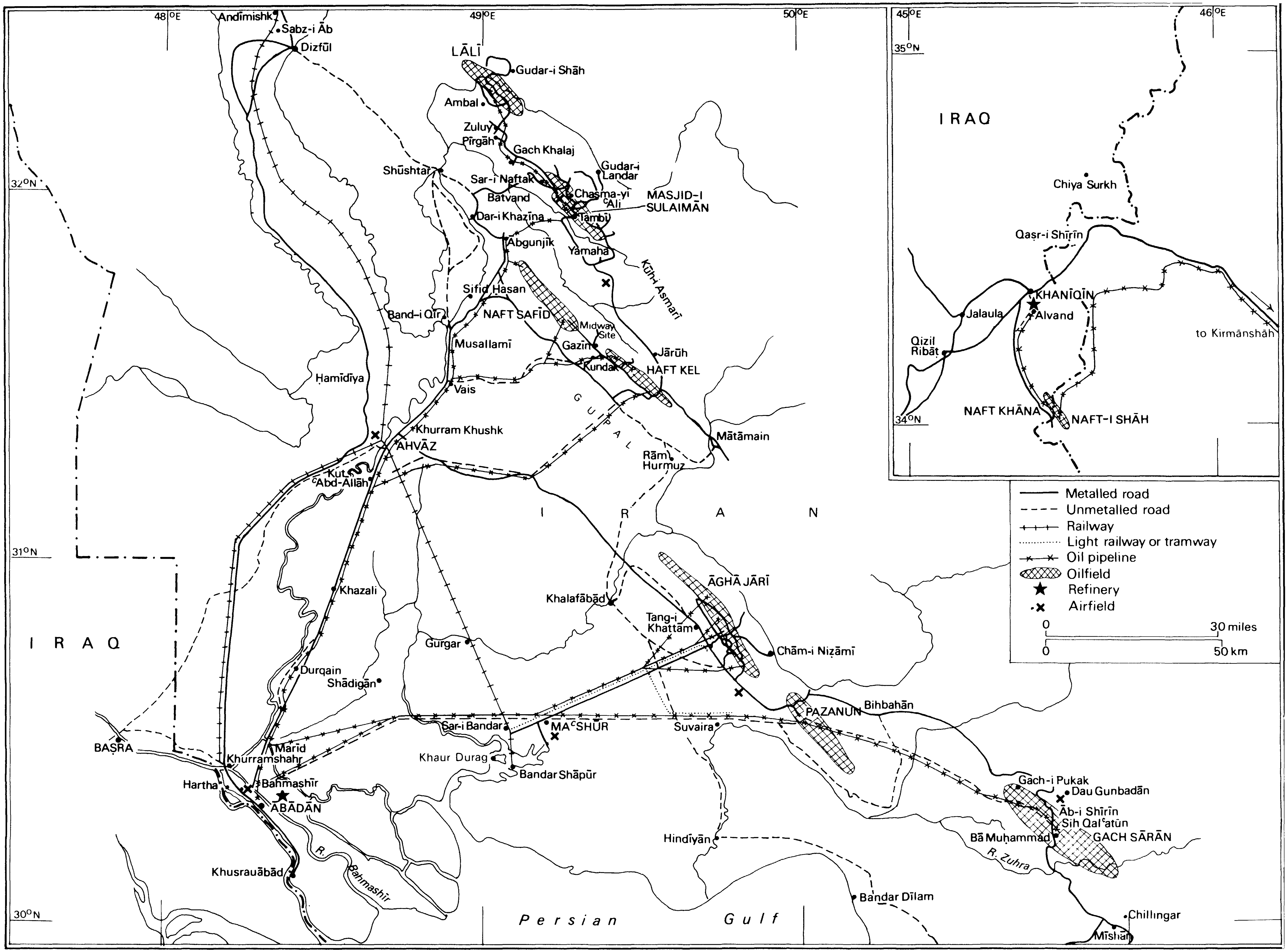
government under the concessionary provision of a sum equal to 20 per cent of any dividend distribution to the ordinary stockholders above £671,250.

The British Treasury in the face of the terrible financial position of the country,[19] at first refused to make an exception for AIOC in respect of its payments to the Iranian government and neither the representations of AIOC nor the intervention of the Foreign Office was persuasive in changing its mind. Before the final negotiations of the Supplemental Oil Agreement in 1949, an accommodation had been reached with the Treasury, but by that time confidence had already been damaged. Furthermore, the Treasury was unwilling to revalue the rate for gold exchange to which part of the royalty payments were pegged. This was a complicated issue with commitments to international agreements, but Iranians argued rightly that the official price bore no relation to the prices current on the open markets. The annoyance of Iranian negotiators was directed against AIOC, which was wrongly alleged to have connived in depriving the Iranian government of its revenues. Relations between the British government and AIOC were sometimes uneasy, and their views did not necessarily coincide. It was with reluctance rather than enthusiasm that ʿAbbās Qulī Gulshāyān, Finance Minister in Muḥammad Sāʿid's second government, signed the Supplemental Agreement on 19 July 1949, after a final negotiating session of almost six months. It offered better terms than were currently available in Saudi Arabia or Iraq, although much below Iranian expectations. Between 1943 and 1950, production tripled from 9,705,769 tons to 31,750,147 tons and royalties quadrupled from 1944 to 1950, £4,464,438 to £16,031,735. Iranian employment totalled 75,853 in 1950. Some idea of the growth of the Iranian market for oil products from 1933 may be gauged from the deliveries of AIOC to it up to 1950 (see Appendix 5 which does not include Russian supplies). A view of oil field development in the concessionary period is shown in map 13.

NATIONALIZATION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OIL CONSORTIUM

The lack of conviction of Gulshāyān, the impracticality of some of the Iranian ideas, the delay in submission by the Iranian government as well as some insensitivity shown by the Company and the British government in the politi-

[19] On Great Britain's bankrupt post-war economy see Alec Cairncross, *Years of Recovery, British Economic Policy 1945–1951*.



Map 13. Oilfields

cally motivated atmosphere of the time, did not presage a rapid legislative passage for the Supplemental Agreement at the end of a charged session of the Majlis. A few deputies of the National Front took the initiative and by filibustering tactics, prevented a vote on the agreement being obtained before the final meeting of the 15th Majlis. Muḥammad Sāʿid, a respected elderly prime minister, lacked the political will to assert strong leadership and was indecisive. He resigned in April 1950 to make way for ʿAlī Manṣūr, of whom the Shah expected much, but who accomplished little. In an attempt to take the sting out of the oil controversy and disguise his own inaction, Manṣūr set up an Oil Committee of the Majlis. This special committee actually became the most effective platform for the dissemination of Dr Muṣaddiq's ideas, because it was he who quickly succeeded in dominating its proceedings. The Supplemental Agreement languished with other measures for budget appropriations and the launching of the Seven Year Plan, while the economic situation deteriorated and financial requirements became more pressing during the last full year of the operations of the AIOC.

The political crisis became more confused. In an attempt to reassert himself, the Shah, with the approval of the U.S. State Department, reluctantly appointed General ʿAlī Razmārā prime minister in June 1950. In the event it was a gamble that failed. Razmārā may have been inclined to liberal sentiments but, as a soldier, he was suspected of having dictatorial intentions. Moreover, he never mastered his contempt for politicians and was devious in attempting to dodge oil decisions. Above all, the circumstances of his appointment imposed an American dimension upon the Iranian political scene, turning domestic controversies into international issues in the emerging Cold War confrontation.[20]

A further important factor was the American decision, in the face of its own concessionary difficulties in Saudi Arabia, which were aggravated by Ibn Saud's excessive personal expenditure, to simplify its concessionary payments there on the general basis of a 50:50 share of profits. This introduced a radical new approach to concessionary payments in the Middle East in December 1950.[21] The concept of profit sharing had been introduced into Venezuela in 1948 and was facilitated by American tax concessions, not applicable to British companies. Moreover, many people insufficiently appreciated or disregarded the fact that the shared profit arrangement applied to the *subsidiary* producing companies of the foreign oil companies operating in Venezuela and Saudi Arabia; it did

[20] There are many studies on this. Bruce R. Kuniholm, *The Origins of the Cold War in the Near East* is comprehensive and relevant.

[21] On American Middle East Oil Policy see Miller, *Saudi Arabian Oil*, and Anderson, ARAMCO.

not involve the activities of the parent Company. AIOC was not organized in that way and was not prepared any more than any other oil company, to share its *total* earnings with any one concessionary country. It was, however, prepared to set up a subsidiary production company in Iran and to share the profits from such a company with the Iranian government and informed Razmārā accordingly in February 1951. He refused to commit himself and kept the offer secret. The Iranian government would have almost doubled revenues between 1948 and 1950 if it had accepted the Supplemental Agreement, but it mistakenly believed that AIOC was completely dependent on Iran.

The Supplemental Agreement entangled in these controversies never had another hearing in the Majlis on its own merits. Razmārā received financial advances from AIOC on account for royalty payments of £11 million with £25 million more in promises, but disclosed neither of these financial offers of assistance publicly as he waited vainly for a political miracle or American magic. His advisers proposed accepting the Supplemental Agreement. He was assassinated leaving a mosque on 7 March 1951. Ḥusain ʿAlā succeeded him as prime minister. Dr Muṣaddiq, chairman of the Majlis Oil Committee, moved the rejection of the Supplemental Agreement, which he had consistently opposed. Within a few weeks Dr Muṣaddiq became prime minister and the Majlis formally approved of the nationalization of the oil industry in a bill which the Shah signed on 1 May 1951.

It was a personal triumph for Dr Muṣaddiq and his National Front group, for he had constantly opposed foreign intervention in the industrial enterprise of Iran, especially in the oil sector.[22] Moreover, he had scored a victory over the Shah in having obstructed parliamentary proceedings to further his own political programme. The oil issue had provided him with a platform for his opposition to royal policies. He was not alone, however, for it was clear that the religious agitation provoked by Āyatullāh Abuʾl-Qāsim Kāshānī had also been instrumental in sustaining the campaign for oil nationalization, especially after his return to Tehran from exile in June 1950. Kāshānī believed that industrialization was having a harmful effect on Iranian society and undermining its spiritual values. Supported by many members of the bazaar, he denounced the Seven Year Plan as a "godless enterprise".[23] These opinions were later echoed in the

[22] For Iranian views of the dispute see Pīrniya, *Dah sāl-i kūshish*; Makkī, *Kitāb-i Siyāh*; Rūḥānī, *Tārīkh*; Katouzian, *Political Economy* and Muṣṭafā Fātiḥ, *op.cit.*

[23] *Christian Science Monitor*, 12 January 1951. See also Yann Richard "Ayatollah Kashani: Precursor of the Islamic Republic", pp. 101–124; and *Īrān-i Mā* 7 March 1952, "All over the world people have realized that it was Kāshānī who united the people of Iran in their attempt to eradicate the influence of AIOC opposition to Musaddiq."

views of the Islamic Republican Party, who credited Kāshānī, not Muṣaddiq, with the triumph of the oil nationalization policy.

The AIOC has been criticized for ignoring the auguries of the time as if it was engaged in some sinister conspiracy against the Iranian people. Indeed, Dr Muṣaddiq himself persistently proclaimed that the Company was an instrument of repression on behalf of the British government, particularly during proceedings before the International Court of Justice at the Hague in June 1952. Members of the World Bank on their mediating mission to Iran in March 1952, were impartial in their approach to finding a solution of the oil problem. Nevertheless, one of the members, Hector Prud'homme remarked, "It would be difficult to reach any agreement in the atmosphere that prevails in Iran now. The oil problem is mainly a political problem. Our difficulty was that we were dealing with political men and not businessmen."[24] There was nothing intrinsically wrong in the Iranian government's insistence on political priorities, but there was nothing essentially wrong in a commercial company's assertion of its economic constraints. The misfortune was that because of a lack of mutual confidence both sides misjudged the moment for compromise. Yet, while the histrionics and rhetoric of the time are explicable, they should not obscure the commitment and co-operation of other Iranian governments and AIOC in developing the oil resources and using the skills of the oil workers for Iranian economic progress, which emerged from the positive rather than negative aspects of their relationship.

The Nationalization was a unilateral appropriation not a negotiated settlement, irrespective of its political inevitability or its economic desirability. Iran had crossed its oil Rubicon. There was no going back. AIOC took measures to defend its interests, the Iranian government took action to establish its rights, the British government moved to protect its nationals, while intermediaries made attempts to reconcile the differences. The United Nations, the International Court of Justice and the World Bank became involved. The American and British governments, with their differing assessments of the state of Iran and the chances of it resisting alleged communist influence, tried to present a joint approach. In spite of public statements, in reality they were divided not only on their attitudes to the Iranian government, but on their appreciation of its attitude to them and its international stance.

In Iran, too, divisions appeared between the National Front and its associates

[24] *The Times*, 21 March 1952.

as the promised panacea for all political and economic ills was painfully not proving to be the appropriate prescription. A brief political struggle took place in July 1952 when Qavām al-Salṭana failed to oust Dr Muṣaddiq. Diplomatic relations were severed with the United Kingdom in October 1952. The oil issue was enmeshed in political and diplomatic complexities and nobody had the authority to unravel the difficulties. Elsewhere, the world soon ignored the lack of Iranian oil production but was fascinated by its political consequences. Few were willing to handle disputed oil, not only because of the legal consequences but because of condoning action to which they too might be exposed if a precedent were set. Production increased in other countries of the Middle East, particularly in Kuwait and Iraq, and the loss of Iranian oil was made good and forgotten.

It was a chastening and deeply unfortunate experience. The financial failure of his post-nationalization oil policy partially weakened Muṣaddiq and his supporters and affected their political power, while strengthening the credibility of the Tūda Party. After his arrest on 26 August 1953, following a controversial coup engineered by the CIA and principally carried out by forces loyal to the Shah, Muṣaddiq's political idealism, although not effaced, was momentarily eclipsed.[25] The Shah, almost disgraced, emerged and gradually asserted his authority, becoming in the early 1960s increasingly conscious of a sense of his divine mission for his country and intolerant of political opponents. Freed from concessionary restraints, oil resources were thereafter more closely linked to the destiny of Iran as perceived by the Shah and his ministers. Rising oil revenues increased the power of the state and began to dominate the political economy of the nation. The government, although dependent on the constitutional approval of the Majlis for additional taxation, became almost financially independent, since it was effortlessly supplied with unprecedented revenues, with little or no debate over the priorities for state expenditure.

There were no restrictions on royal ambition other than economic prudence, which had little relevance for the achievement of the White Revolution or the "Great Civilisation". Growing world consumption of oil products and increasing OPEC production power caused an upward ratcheting of world oil prices from the late 1960s to the end of the 1970s. The disintegration and collapse of Muṣaddiq's administration, like the earlier dismissal of Qavām in 1947, once again left the Iranian political middle ground a "no go" area and compromise

[25] For personal accounts see, Woodhouse, pp. 106–33 and Kermit Roosevelt, *Countercoup*. See also the view of Zabih, *The Mossadegh Era*, and Abrahamian, *Iran Between Two Revolutions*.

was spurned. The revival of the Iranian oil industry in its nationalized form had actually buttressed the power of the Shah rather than having moderated the exercise of it.

Following the return of the Shah from his brief exile after the deposition of Dr Muṣaddiq's government in August 1953, General Zāhidī became prime minister. The country was confused and the economic situation depressed. Zāhidī, reviewing his political and diplomatic options, agreed to renew relations with the British government and reopen negotiations for an oil settlement. There were consultations between the American and British governments over a solution of the oil problem. Discussions took place among the international oil companies involved in Middle East operations, who would have to adjust their production schedules in order to accommodate the return of Iranian oil products to world markets: it was not just a simple matter of resuming diplomatic relations or turning on the oil taps. Intricate supply equations needed to be carefully resolved in order to preserve commercial equilibrium and prevent the hostility of other oil producing countries, which had raised their production to compensate for the loss of Iranian crude oil. No less important was the nature of the settlement to replace the old concessionary structure, to take into account the principles of nationalization which had been accepted, and to introduce the new 50:50 profit sharing arrangement which, following the ARAMCO agreement with Saudi Arabia at the end of 1950, was now the pattern of concessionary relations. All this required inter-governmental and inter-company agreement. Gradually and with difficulty a consensus emerged during January to March 1954, settling a negotiating position to take up with the Iranian government. Mr (later Sir) Denis Wright, British ambassador in Iran (1963–71) resumed Anglo-Iranian relations as chargé d'affaires in December 1953 and reported to the Foreign Office that the AIOC would not be able to resume its former rôle in the Iranian oil industry.

A consortium of companies was provisionally established by 1 April 1954 and its representatives, Orville Harden (later replaced by Howard Page) of Standard Oil (N.J.), Harold Snow of AIOC and J.H. Loudon of Royal Dutch Shell arrived in Tehran on 11 April 1954. The Iranian negotiators, led by ʿAlī Amīnī, Minister of Finance, were ʿAbd-Allāh Intiẓām, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fatḥ-Allāh Khān Nūrī Isfandiyārī, formerly chargé d'affaires in London (1930–1), and Murtaẓā Qulī Khān Bayāt, Chairman of the National Iranian Oil Company, who attended occasionally. Sir Roger Stevens, British ambassador in Iran, and Snow negotiated in separate meetings with Amīnī on the question of compensation for AIOC. The talks, conducted with goodwill on all sides, were

long, arduous and challenging. The Consortium Agreement was initialled by Howard Page and ʿAlī Amīnī on 5 August 1954, ratified by the Majlis by 113 votes to 5 with 1 abstention on 21 October and signed by the Shah on 29 October.

In form it was an agency contract in which Iran retained sovereignty over its oil resources and assets in the concessionary area, but permitted the Consortium to operate and use them on behalf of the Government for twenty five years, with the provision of three five-year renewals at its option. For this purpose two operating companies were formed and registered in Holland, Iranian Oil Exploration and Producing Company and the Iranian Oil Refining Company, over which the Iranian government had the right of inspection and to audit their accounts, which it delegated to the National Iranian Oil Company. The two companies were non-profit making and not directly engaged in exporting or selling oil, which was undertaken by the trading companies of the Consortium members, which were established in Tehran and operated until the early 1970s. In London a holding company, Iranian Oil Participants Ltd. (IROP), was established to conduct Consortium business and a servicing company, Iranian Oil Services Ltd. (IROS).

Those companies finally constituting the Consortium and their shareholdings were:

Company	Shareholding
British Petroleum Company Limited	40%
Shell Petroleum N.V.	14%
Gulf Oil Corporation	7%
Mobil Oil Corporation	7%
Standard Oil Company of California	7%
Exxon Corporation	7%
Texaco Incorporated	7%
Compagnie Française des Pétroles	6%
The Iricon Group of Companies:	
American Independent Oil Company Atlantic Richfield Company Getty Oil Company Signal Oil and Gas Company Standard Oil Company (Ohio) Continental Oil Company	5%

The Consortium Agreement was a feat of considerable diplomatic skill, commercial appreciation and practical good sense, for which much of the credit

belongs to ʿAlī Amīnī, who had, perhaps, the weakest hand but played it with integrity, patriotism and understanding. He acknowledged the great political impetus which had been given to the Iranian oil industry by the act of nationalization, but he realized its economic limitations. He reported to the Majlis on 21 October that "the solution that I bring you is perhaps not the ideal solution . . . but we do not yet have the means to compete in the international markets because we do not possess a marketing organization." This explanation was practical wisdom. As a result of the Agreement, exploration, production and refining were to be carried on within its area by the Consortium, whilst all the ancillary services were administered by the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), which was responsible for all activities outside the designated area, including the refineries and internal distribution.

THE NATIONAL IRANIAN OIL COMPANY

External Relations

The first seriously considered project for a national Iranian oil company arose from the report of the Plan Organization in 1949 in which it was stated that "The Seven Year Plan stipulates that a Government-owned joint stock company shall be created for the purpose of exploring for, exploiting and marketing oil, all implicitly under the direction of the Plan Organization, since funds for the purpose are to be provided by it."[26] Details of an exploration programme, a widespread distribution network, budgetary provision and an administrative organization were given. Emphasis was placed on increasing the consumption of petroleum products throughout the country and the importance of "the delivery by pipeline of oil and gas from the present fields in the south to the more densely populated areas north of the Zagros Mountains". "Pipeline distribution", it was argued, "of both oil and gas will certainly become a part of Iran's economic programme." Like much else in the Seven Year Development Plan which was not implemented, the suggestions for the oil industry provided just a sketch of a blueprint for future action, although an exploration programme was initiated discovering a show of oil near Qum.

The National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) was constituted after Nationalization to manage the domestic oil industry. Following the Consortium Agreement attention was paid to the constitution of NIOC, approved in 1955.

[26] *Report on Seven Year Development Plan for the Plan Organization of the Imperial Government of Iran* (New York, Overseas Consultants, Inc., 1949), vol. IV, p. 260.

Afterwards, first ʿAbd-Allāh Intiẓām until 1962, then Dr Manūchihr Iqbāl until he died in 1978 and Hūshang Anṣārī were chairmen. The Iranian Petroleum Act of 1957 vested in the NIOC definite functions and responsibilities as the owner of and the authority for all national oil resources. It was a favourable moment for the new company. It was not long before NIOC was exercising its rights and implementing the national oil policy. It was not just a matter of managing the national oil resources but maximizing revenues as a powerful stimulus for national economic growth, producing a favourable political response and promoting Iran's influence in international relations.

The late fifties, sixties and early seventies, were an era of growth and great expectations.[27] NIOC and the oil sector played their parts in domestic progress and international affairs. Thus, for example, an extraordinary contribution was made to GNP by the oil sector between 1959 and 1974, rising from 28 million rials to 1635 billion rials and the rising contribution of oil receipts to foreign exchange earnings between 1954 and 1974, from $34.4 million, 15 per cent, to £18,000 million (see chapter 17). Oil revenues constituted two thirds of the finance available to the second, third and fourth plans. Posted prices for Iranian light crude oil advanced tenfold from $1.790 in 1971 to $11.875 by the end of 1973 (see Appendix 6), and crude oil production increased tenfold from 24,000,000 tons in 1956 to 251,900,000 tons in 1972 peaking at 301,200,000 tons in 1974 and dropping by half to 158,100,100 tons in 1979.

The NIOC had been empowered to negotiate joint venture contracts with other organizations both on-shore and in maritime sovereign areas. In August 1957 the first such agreement was concluded with the Italian state company, Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi (ENI). Within fourteen years another ten contracts had been signed with companies from the United States, France, Germany and Japan. The intention was to lessen dependence on the Consortium and enhance oil revenue-making opportunities by insisting on more advantageous terms. Iran pioneered this type of arrangement, but only three joint venture companies struck oil in any commercial quantities, so there was little possibility of lessening dependence on the Consortium (see Tables 3.1–3.2).

Other developments included service style contracts in which the foreign operator had no ownership rights in Iran, but provided the initial expertise and finance for exploration. Once oil was discovered NIOC assumed control of production and an increasing share of marketing, and paid a service fee to cover the preliminary expenditure, either in cash or oil. Three such contracts were

[27] On oil, see Fesharaki, *Development*; on foreign affairs, Shahram Chubin and Sepehr Zabih, *The Foreign Relations of Iran*; on the economy, McLachlan, "The Iranian Economy 1960–1976".

Table 3.1. *Iranian crude exports by various operators 1956–74* (thousands of tons)

Year	Consortium	SIRIP	Joint Ventures				Total
			IPAC	LAPCO	IMINCO	NIOC	
1956	24,494	—	—		—	—	24,494
1957	33,277		—	—	—	34	33,311
1958	37,774	—	—	—	—	48	37,822
1959	43,001			—	—	33	43,034
1960	48,680	—	—	—	—	45	48,725
1961	54,493	151	22		—	78	54,744
1962	61,402	312	13	—	—	102	61,829
1963	68,509	700	6	—		118	69,333
1964	78,134	1,255	77	—	—	105	79,580
1965	83,055	553	1,647			1,375	86,630
1966	95,329	818	2,187	—	—	1,300	99,634
1967	116,437	440	3,018	—	—	2,510	122,405
1968	127,203	767	3,717	330	—	2,060	134,077
1969	144,323	1,316	2,859	5,339	623	4,360	158,820
1970	163,797	1,572	1,845	6,666	2,786	5,880	182,546
1971	193,823	2,213	3,903	6,387	3,313	5,575	215,214
1972	215,219	883	3,772	5,709	3,711	11,835	241,129
1973	247,978	3,185	3,290	5,469	1,951	16,255	278,758
1974	247,775	3,302	4,001	5,666	1,732	20,945	283,421

Notes: (a) All figures are net crude exports; (b) NIOC figures for 1956–61 are for bunkering only. Thereafter, the export figures include sale of aviation fuel to Afghanistan. As of 1965, NIOC exports include the crude handed over by the Consortium as well as liftings from partnership ventures; (c) All Consortium data include crude delivered to the Abadan refinery for their own account.

Source: Compiled from data in NIOC's Annual Reports 1967–73. NIOC's Marketing Department and the Statistical and Information Office of the affiliated companies. From Fesharaki, *Development of the Iranian Oil Industry*, p. 204.

negotiated in 1966 and 1969 and a further six on stiffer terms in 1974. These too were contractual innnovations in Iran and stimulated a widening interest in Iranian oil. For the location map of these agreements see map 14.

Because the search to discover other sources of oil in Iran outside the area of the Consortium's operations was unsuccessful and as the size of Iranian budgets grew inexorably larger, the Shah was determined to tighten the screws on the members of the Consortium to make them produce more, although they had fulfilled all that had been required of them and more under the terms of the Consortium Agreement. The Shah, however, like his father, wanted to accelerate economic take-off in order to get into a higher orbit of industrialization more quickly within his own lifetime. This was critical because he felt that his own

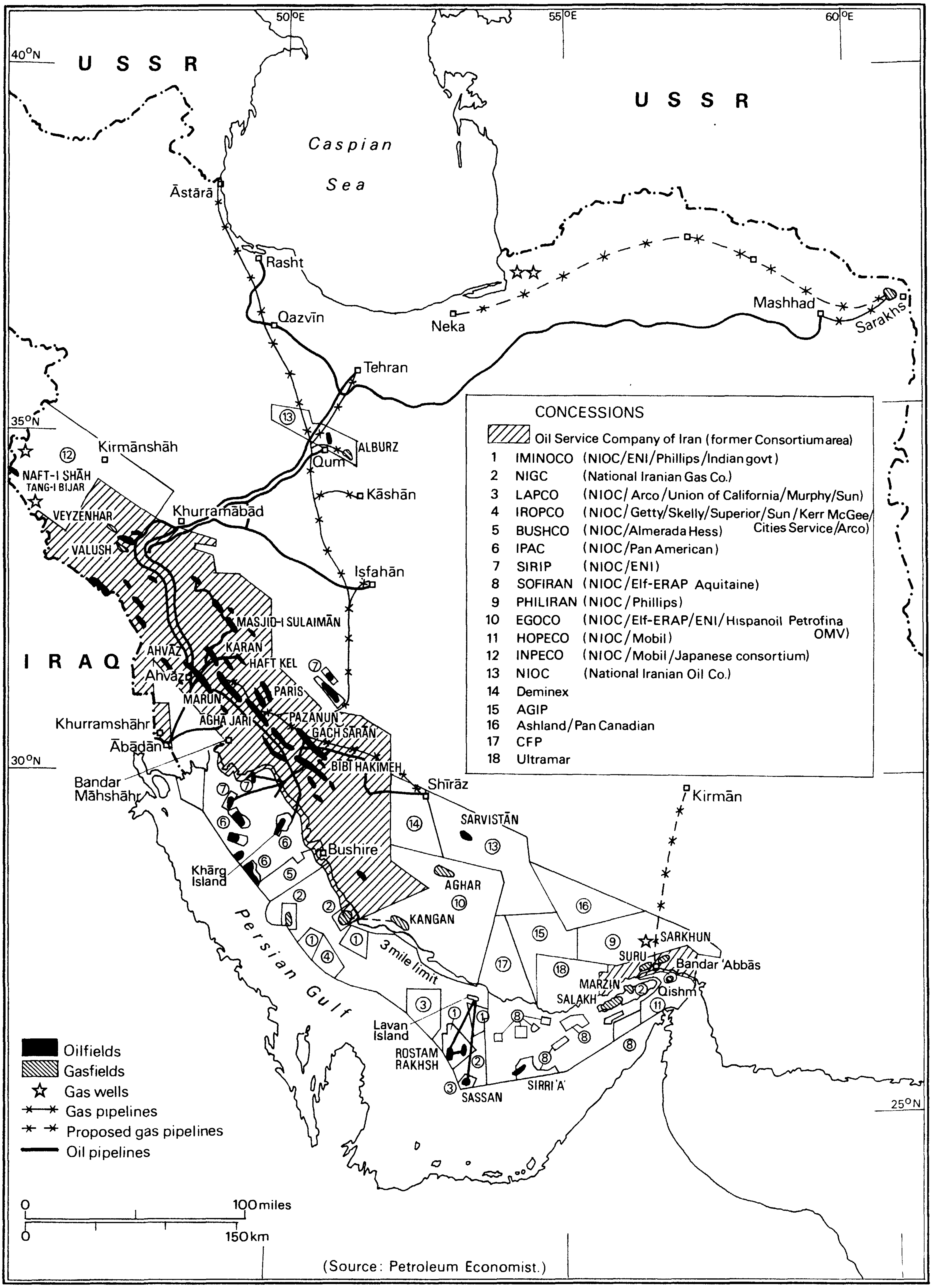
Table 3.2. *Iranian production and export of crude oil and petroleum products 1974–8* (bbl/day)

	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978
PRODUCTION					
Naftei-Shāh	18,303	16,970	18,435	17,587	15,060
Southern Area	5,542,216	4,875,290	5,411,763	5,099,011	4,626,405
CRUDE OIL SALES					
Light	2,466,104	2,148,786	2,196,773	1,702,733	1,415,202
Heavy	2,189,729	1,762,294	1,695,278	1,508,213	1,294,533
CRUDE REFINED FOR CONSORTIUM MEMBERS	297,037	291,211	215,641	205,457	
NIOC DIRECT EXPORTS					
Light	144,783	170,026	449,644	580,506	539,219
Heavy	108,842	136,213	404,831	555,131	629,450
NIOC PRODUCT EXPORT	0	0	0	29,199	135,828
IPAC					
Production	132,392	176,364	207,405	272,547	324,772
Export	132,555	176,162	209,836	276,201	321,523
SIRIP					
Production	75,918	52,788	45,465	45,504	39,314
Export	74,208	50,821	48,189	43,828	40,559
LAPCO					
Production	194,226	175,471	152,226	182,144	40,931
Export	194,418	174,048	149,847	169,523	37,929
IMINOCO					
Production	58,285	52,649	47,354	45,887	172,091
Export	58,607	52,592	46,932	46,192	166,374
SOFIRAN					
Production	0	0	0	0	7,783
Export	0	0	0	0	4,743
TOTAL ASSOC. COS.					
Production	460,821	457,272	452,450	546,082	584,891
Export	459,788	453,623	454,804	535,681	571,127
TOTAL CRUDE PROD'N	6,021,340	5,349,532	5,882,648	5,662,680	5,226,356
TOTAL CRUDE EXPORT	5,369,246	4,670,942	5,201,330	4,882,264	4,449,534
TOTAL EXPORTS OF CRUDE & PRODUCTS	5,666,283,	4,962,153	5,416,971	5,116,920	4,585,362

Source: IROP

destiny was precarious. He was not satisfied with the idea of a posthumous apotheosis, he wanted to enjoy the living reality. He wished to outshine the Achaemenian age, which he was to honour in 1971.

Throughout the 1960s but especially in 1961, 1966 and 1968, the Shah pressed the Consortium subtly and blatantly, publicly and privately, politically and economically to increase their production and to give the NIOC a share in the international markets. He was not interested in productive capacity, only



Map 14. Oil and gas in Iran

production. He shrewdly exploited and played off differences between the member companies and revealed details of their agreed production quotas. The majority of the Consortium members, with other Middle Eastern interests, having revived the flow of Iranian oil, were engaged in delicately balancing their various concessionary interests, about which the Shah was little concerned. He was prepared to play his Russian card in order to persuade the American members of the Consortium to toe the line, particularly those with interests in Saudi Arabia. Iranian competition with Saudi Arabia at this time was a feature of diplomatic relations and the proceedings in OPEC. The Shah was knowledgeable about petroleum affairs and held his own in conversations with representatives of the Consortium.

The Shah exerted moral pressure by appealing for sympathy for his now more populous and water-short land. He stressed the strategic importance of his country to western governments and after the Arab restrictions on supplies in the wake of the Six Day War of 1967, and that of Yom Kippur in 1973, he emphasized his reliability. With the British declaration of pulling out from East of Suez and the Nixon doctrine of regional security, the Shah was able to exert considerable leverage to achieve his own objectives. He was astute, knowledgeable and persistent, the fiddler who played the tune to which others danced. ʿAbd-Allāh Intiẓām, the Chairman of NIOC, opened negotiations in 1961 and prevailed upon the Consortium to exceed its accepted production levels. In 1965 Consortium production dipped as demand dropped in the market and because of certain competitive pressures which put Iranian oil at a slight economic disadvantage, but not below stipulated levels. The Shah was unimpressed with any excuses and requested that the growth in production offtake be restored to a 17 per cent increase because, he argued, he was suffering from the effects of inflation imported from the western economies, and his large and increasing population required more expenditure on industrial development. Although the Consortium members increased production by some 12 per cent, the Shah was unappeased and demanded that the Consortium relinquish some of its area and sell oil to NIOC which would then be able to commence its own overseas marketing operations. This it did, mostly to East European countries.

The British and American governments, as much interested in Iran's strategic co-operation as in oil income, advised the Consortium not to rock the Iranian economy or thwart the Shah's ambitions. The advice, like the reasoning, was familiar. It rested on the fear of Iran quitting the western alliance and nobody was prepared to call the Shah's bluff. It was the oil companies who had to perform a balancing act with the Arab oil producing countries, not the diplo-

mats or politicians. The Consortium in 1967 agreed to increase production by 11% for two years, relinquish a quarter of their area and make oil available to NIOC for four years on the understanding that it was to be sold to certain Eastern European countries so as not to destabilize the markets in which members of the Consortium traded. A year later, the Shah, taking advantage of the increased Iranian production of 22% as a result of the Arab-Israeli Six Day War, which caused an interruption in Arab oil supplies, pressed home his advantage when production fell to the previous level. He expected the increased production to be maintained and when members of the Consortium dragged their feet they were warned that the criteria for production levels was to be based, not on their judgment of market demand, but to guarantee the budgetary requirements of the Iranian government, almost a repetition of the arguments which preceded the signing of the Supplemental Agreement in 1949 and the 1933 Concession. The dilemma was the same.[28]

It was not market forces but political priorities which were setting the pace, as in Muṣaddiq's time. Inevitably, such a fundamental clash of interests was difficult to meet by compromise and neither time nor circumstances were propitious for more than a rearguard action whilst the Shah maintained his claims. On 14 May 1969 Mr D.E.C. (later Sir David) Steel for the Consortium and Dr Manūchihr Iqbāl for the Iranian government signed an agreement which raised Iranian royalty payments for a year, but without further specific commitments. It would be an exaggeration to imply that the Shah was following a consistent strategy, but by adroit opportunism he had restored Iranian output to its former importance, second in the Middle East league. It appeared an appropriate moment to capitalize on this success and enhance the value of the barrel, but this he felt he could do best in association with other producing countries, who would have to be persuaded to follow his line. The Shah was not long in setting the pace for higher prices, encouraged by the success he had already achieved. These successes, however, may then have encouraged the Iranian government to exaggerate its own oil importance, and pursue an over-ambitious programme of economic development beyond the administrative or structural capacity of the country.

The creation in September 1960 of the Organization of the Oil Producing

[28] Stocking, *Middle East Oil*, p. 449 described the situation of the Consortium: "They have the delicate task of maintaining an equilibrium of satisfaction among the several host governments . . . They take the position that the increase in output of any one country is limited by the general level of output for the Middle East as a whole."

Exporting Companies (OPEC), of which Iran was one of the founder members and provided its first Secretary-General, established a forum for the exercise not just of national pressures to safeguard and increase oil revenues, but for collective international action to achieve those ends.[29] After almost a decade of successful passive resistance to attempts to lower posted prices on which oil revenues were based, members of OPEC in the late 1960s and early 1970s initiated negotiations with the principal international oil companies to increase the level of posted prices. Provoked by the success of Libya in 1969–70 in raising its revenues, the Shah responded by requesting further similar increases for Iran. He succeeded in promoting and leading a Gulf Committee comprising the oil producing states in the Persian Gulf area. Threatening to cancel the agreement with the Consortium, the Shah on 14 February 1971 forced the members of the Consortium to accept higher prices. The oil companies were unsupported by their national governments, which preferred to ensure immediate security of oil supplies than worry about the dangers of higher prices. The consumer governments of Western Europe and the United States disbelieved the warnings they received from the oil companies. The Shah's able Finance Minister, Jamshīd Āmūzgār, handled these negotiations with realism and understanding with Lord Strathalmond, the leader of the companies' negotiators in Tehran during January and February 1971. The changing producer–consumer relationship and its global implications caused considerable anxiety in those years.[30]

In return for a five-year agreement wanted by the oil companies to stop the leap-frogging of demands from the producing countries the Shah obtained:-

(1) A change in the taxation rate from a minimum 50:50 to 55:45% in favour of the Persian Gulf OPEC member countries.
(2) A straight increase of 33 cents per barrel in Persian Gulf crude oil prices, an additional two cents per barrel for transportation costs, a 2.5 cents annual increase to offset inflation in the West, and a 5 cents per barrel annual increase to counteract increases in production prices.
(3) The elimination of all discounts previously deducted from posted prices.

The Shah was aspiring to be the dominant force in the region, following the British government's decision to withdraw from the Persian Gulf by the end of 1971. To advertise this ambition in November 1971 he annexed Abū Mūsā and

[29] On OPEC see Rouhani, *History* and Seymour, *OPEC*; for the lesser important Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) see Tétreault, *Organization*.

[30] For example, Elizabeth Monroe and Robert Mabro *Oil Producers and Consumers*.

the Tumb Islands, claimed and possessed by Sharja and Ras al-Khaima respectively, at the entrance to the Persian Gulf. Colonel Qadaffi responded by nationalizing BP's (the former AIOC) assets in Libya. The Shah embarked on a massive military build-up, which he believed he could afford with the revenue increases from the rise in oil prices. The interplay of oil revenues with foreign affairs was no less close than its connection with domestic policies.

The Shah's aggressiveness was resented by Arab countries within and without OPEC, particularly Saudi Arabia, whose Oil Minister, Shaikh Zaki Yamani, was not intimidated because of the massive crude oil reserves and the productive capacity of his country, as well as the experience and support of the four major American oil companies operating there. Whilst Shaikh Yamani from 1971 to 1973 was endeavouring to persuade the oil companies to participate in partnership agreements with the oil producing states, the Shah was striving to exorcise the spectre of foreign influence over the Iranian oil industry. By a number of shrewd political manoeuvres, an unexpected temporary breakdown due to sabotage in the pipeline from Saudi Arabia to the eastern Mediterranean and because of tight market demand, he forced the Consortium in July 1973 to renegotiate its privileged position in the Iranian oil industry and relinquish its operations in Iran in return for a twenty year supply agreement.

At a Press Conference in London on 24 June 1972 he forecast "a better relationship with members of the Consortium, a period of close collaboration and co-operation with oil companies which I think is in the interests of both parties, and certainly is in our interest . . . our relationship with them is a new kind of relationship, between free partners. They respect our rights and we do the same with them."[31] A programme was elaborated of increased productive capability, more exploration, the relinquishment of the Ābādān refinery to NIOC and the prolongation of the contractual duration to its fullest extent. The détente in oil relations with the Consortium lasted for some six months before the Shah imposed his conditions for any kind of continuing relationship at a meeting with Consortium representatives in Saint Moritz. He stated in January 1973 that "there are two courses of action open to us now. Since we are the kind of people who know our contracts, one choice is to let the companies continue their operations for the next six years up to 1979, provided that the total earnings from each barrel of our oil are not less than those earned by other regional countries, provided our exporting capacity is increased to eight million barrels of oil per day . . . Alternatively, a new contract could be signed which would

[31] Press Conference of H.I.M. Muḥammad Riżā Shāh, 24 June 1972. *MEES*, vol. xv, No. 36, p. 1, 30 June 1972.

return to Iran all the responsibilities and other things which are not at present in Iran's hands."[32]

After serving notice of his intentions and further discussions with representatives of the Consortium he announced at the ceremonial inauguration of the Soviet-built steel mill near Iṣfahān on 16 March 1973 that Iran had secured "complete and real ownership and management . . . the major foreign oil companies will become mere customers of the quantities of oil we are able to supply them."[33] Also included in his speech were disparaging remarks about Muṣaddiq. On the day when he had fulfilled his father's steel dream, he was enjoying a double success of independence. A Sale and Purchase Agreement was signed on 31 July 1973 and ratified by the Majlis. Its main provisions included:

All exploration, extraction and refining activities and installations were to come under Iranian control. A Service Company registered in Iran and subject to Iranian regulations would perform certain technical functions in relation to exploration and extraction for a period of five years only.
Control of oil reserves was to be transferred from the former Consortium to Iran.
Iran assumed the rights to all gas reserves in the Agreements Area, and complete control of gas exports, with an option open to the former Consortium to secure a 50% share of the operation for the export of gas through Persian Gulf ports.
Iran was guaranteed per-barrel profits at least equal to those secured by other Persian Gulf oil producing states.

The Consortium relationship seemed to have served its purpose, but it had residual responsibility with a company, owned by itself, the Oil Service Company of Iran (OSCO), which had a five year service contract with NIOC. OSCO had responsibility for operations in the former Consortium area related to (1) exploration, development and production of crude oil and natural gas; (2) natural gas liquids processing and; (3) transportation to and loading at the several crude oil and product export terminals. OSCO also acted as a technical and purchasing advisory organization for NIOC. A major programme was under way in the late 1970s on gas gathering, liquid gas recovery and gas injection for secondary recovery of oil from the limestone reservoir. Negotiations for revising the OSCO agreement took place intermittently but no decision was reached by the end of 1978. The Consortium had brought Iranian oil back into the marketplace again and ensured the technical development of Iranian oil industry at a rate and with skill equal to oil operations anywhere else

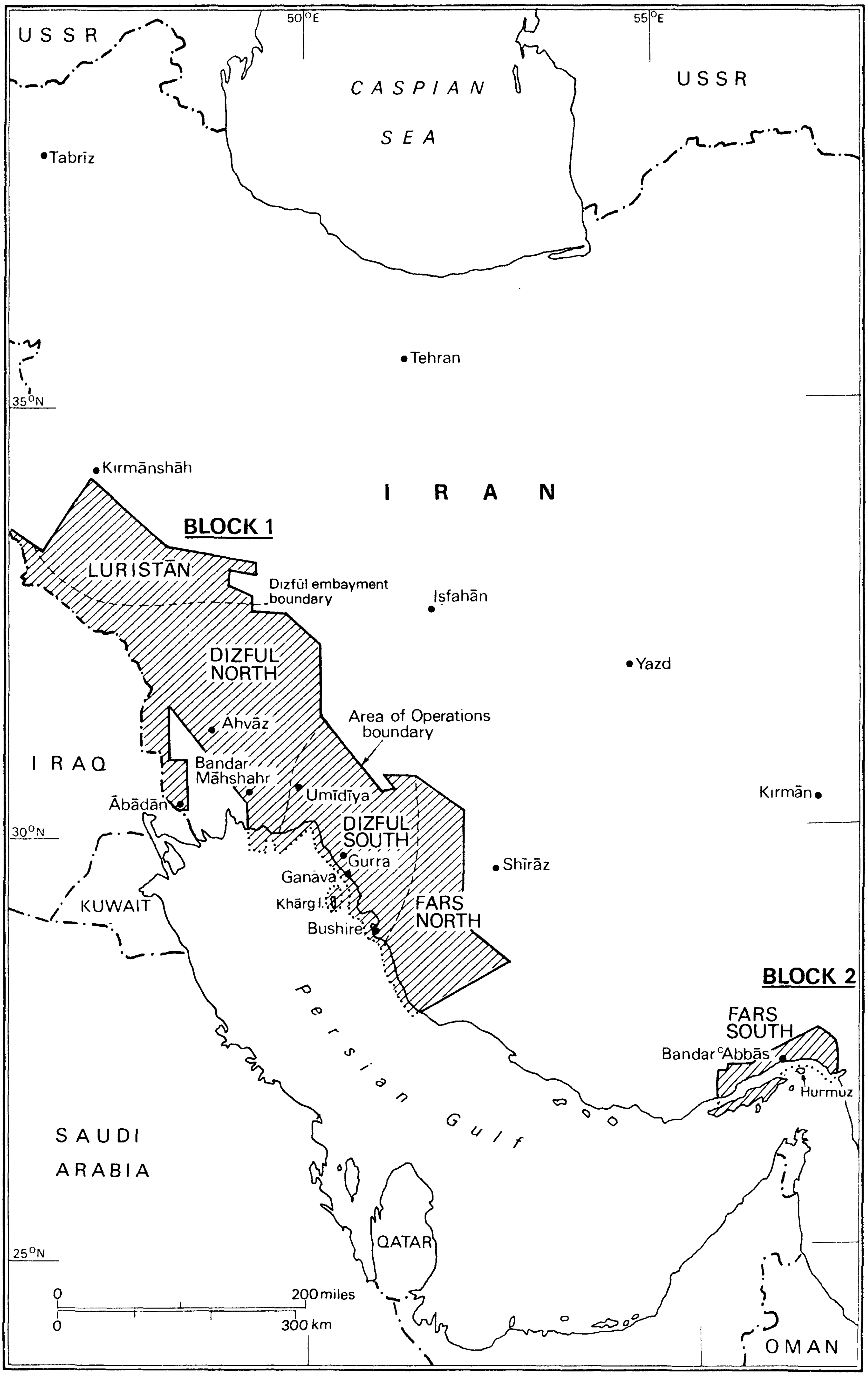
[32] Press Conference of H.I.M. Muḥammad Riżā Shāh, 23 January 1973. *MEES*, vol. XVI, No. 14, pp. 1–5, 26 January 1973.
[33] Press Conference of H.I.M. Muḥammad Riżā Shāh, 16 March 1973. *MEES*, vol. XVI, No. 22, p. 4, 23 March 1973.

in the world. Proficient Iranian technicans and technical experts from members of the Consortium had collaborated with understanding and conviction in advanced petroleum technology. The activities of the Consortium had been vital to the recovery of the Iranian oil industry, restoring the balance between its undoubted political importance and its need for technical efficiency.

The Consortium contributed greatly to the infrastructure of the Iranian oil industry by its capital investment between 1954 and 1977. Production increased sevenfold in twenty years, from 1957 to 1977, and it sustained a good drilling performance, a tenfold increase from 1957 to 1962, reaching nearly a million feet in 1975. Employment in relation to national manpower figures was small because the oil industry is capital- not labour-intensive and highly automated. The most spectacular achievement was the Cham Project, an initial investment of $150 million for the development of vast oil export facilities. These linked firstly the fields of Gach Sārān and Āghā Jārī by large diameter submerged pipelines with tank farms on Khārg Island and loading jetties there. Moreover, the products processed by the refinery at Ābādān were connected with export terminals situated on the Khaur Mūsā inlet at Bandar Māh Shahr 67 miles east of Ābādān. By 1978 six pipelines from 30 inch to 52 inch went from Ganāva on the coast to Khārg Island where there were 13 tanks with an effective capacity of 8,594 million barrels of light crude and 19 of 8,663 million barrels of heavy crude oil and 10 loading berths for the largest tankers. The design and construction were vast in scale to satisfy most of the projected productive capacity of 6 million bbl/day of crude oil from the southern oil fields of Iran. The central location of Ganāva and Khārg Island with respect to these oil fields is shown in map 15.

The National Iranian Oil Company was directly responsible for (1) the domestic marketing of all petroleum products except lubricants; (2) international marketing of crude oil sales; (3) controlling the domestic refining of five refineries; (4) managing an extensive and expanding crude oil and product pipeline network of some 10,000 kilometres; (5) provision of all non-basic services, such as housing, medical care, welfare activities; (6) production from the Naft-i Shāh field; and (7) exploration and production in NIOC reserved areas.

In Autumn 1973, a tight oil-supply position developed leading to higher and rising oil prices. The representatives of the major oil companies and OPEC negotiators failed to reach an agreement on oil prices at around $7 a barrel at a meeting in Vienna, September–October 1973. Shortly afterwards, at a specially convened meeting of OPEC in Kuwait on 11 October, the momentous decision was taken by OPEC to set oil prices themselves. Meantime, the Yom Kippur



Map 15. OSCO area of operations

war had broken out on 6 October which further exacerbated the supply situation following selective Arab oil embargoes sanctioned on 17 October. This reduced Arab oil supplies by 25 per cent, enough to cause panic buying and soaring spot market prices up to $17.34 a barrel. Then, at another conference in Tehran in December 1973 the Shah took the occasion to upstage his other OPEC colleagues and announce another formal increase in crude oil prices to $11.875 a barrel despite Saudi Arabian opposition. The Shah's ambitions for Iran in the 1970s following his White Revolution of the 1960s, provided his justification for sevenfold oil price rises in the five years between 1971 and 1976 (see Appendix 7).

These increases, whilst they did not alone cause the years of creeping depression in the industrialized countries and financial pressure in many of the Third World countries, nevertheless gradually resulted in checking the rising demand for oil. The Shah was at the pinnacle of his oil power. Yet, prices began to fall in relative terms in 1976. The Iranian economy suffered. Oil production in 1975 was down by over 11%, a drop of some $3 billion in Iran's budgeted oil and gas revenues of $21.4 billion out of a total of $27.6 billion. Revenue from Consortium members amounted to some $17.4 million, over 81% of total oil revenues. It was the collapse of the Shah's régime and the outbreak of the Iran–Iraq war in 1981 which took the OPEC market price of Saudi Arabian light to its peak of $34 a barrel. Between 1957 and 1975 Iranian oil income had grown 100 fold to $20 billion annually.

Domestic affairs

NIOC activities were widespread for it was the hub of the Iranian oil industry (see figure 2). From 1951 when the oil fields and the refinery at Ābādān were mainly on a care and maintenance basis, limited operations for internal consumption requirements were kept going. After 1954 the NIOC provided increasing supplies of petroleum products to the domestic market; fuel oil for power raising, gasoline and diesel oil for the rapidly increasing use of cars, lorries and coaches over the long distance roads of Iran, which were gradually knitting together the dispersed rural areas with the capital and larger towns, and aviation spirit for the expanding internal air services.[34] These developments, which included supplies of light oil products for heating and cooking purposes, certainly contributed to an improving standard of living and virtually

[34] In addition to Fesharaki, *Development*, see *Oil in Iran* (The Iranian Petroleum Institute, 1971).

THE NATIONAL IRANIAN OIL COMPANY

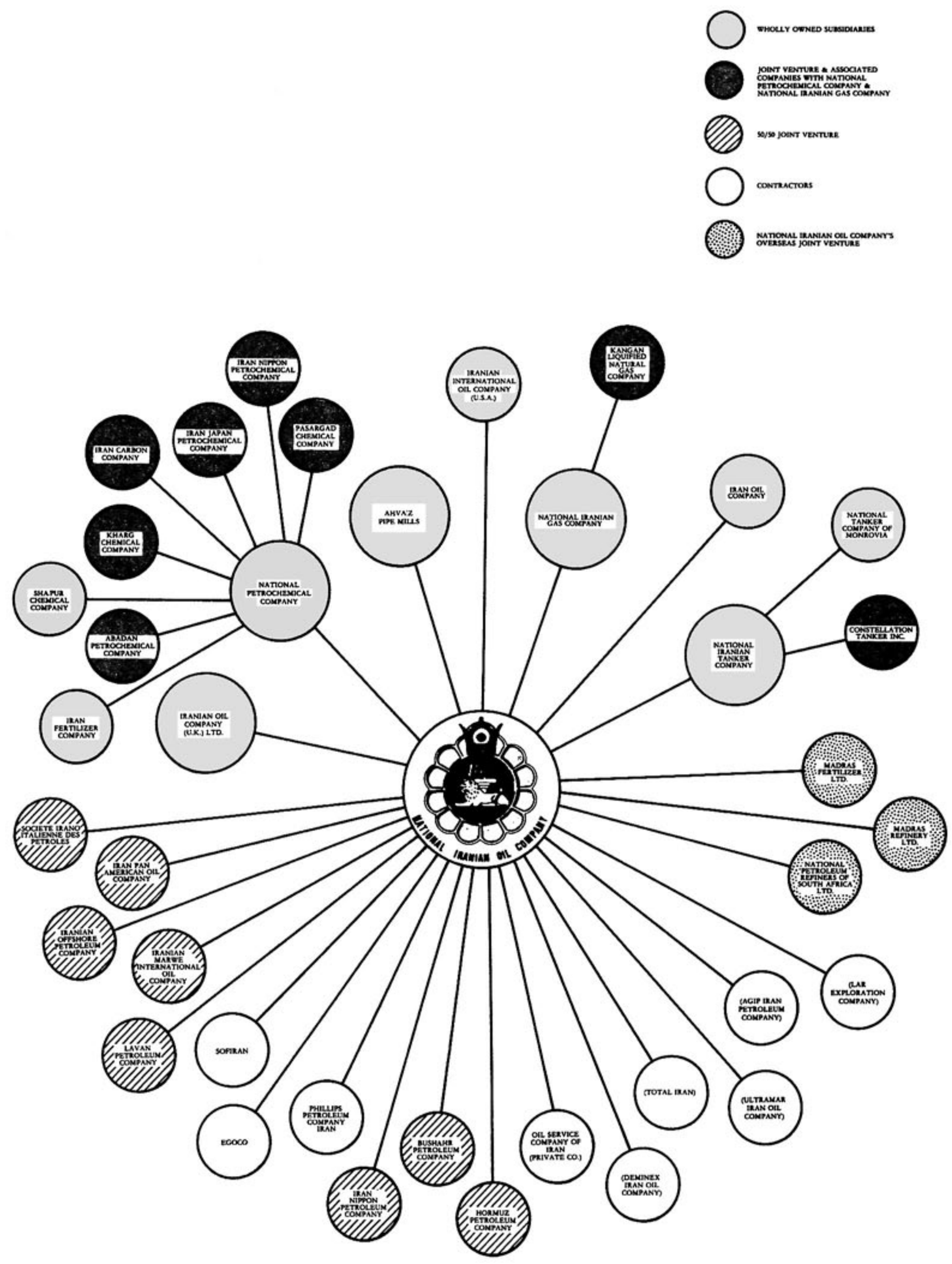


Table 4. *Organization of the distribution centres in selected years.*

	1950	1960	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1973
Area	—	—	7	5	5	5	5	9	9	9
District	17	17	—	24	24	24	24	24	24	24
Branch	57	53	63	41	39	38	35	35	37	37
Sales agency	63	84	78	76	76	78	71	80	76	40
Filling stations*	147	172	238	251	266	323	340	365	390	418
	(—)	(—)	(48)	(68)	(80)	(134)	(155)	(185)	(215)	(275)
Rural dealers	215	927	3,614	5,048	6,179	6,960	7,543	8,233	8,066	9,226
Urban dealers	192	1,345	1,731	1,806	1,890	1,968	2,030	2,138	2,127	2,297
Total	691	2,598	5,731	7,251	8,479	9,396	10,203	10,884	11,944	12,051

*Figures in brackets represent privately owned filling stations.
Source: For 1950, 1960, 1965, 1967, the Distribution Department *Progress Report* 1968. Figures of 1969–73 are based on data which have been collected from the *Annual Reports* and brought to a common base.
From Fesharaki, *Development of the Iranian Oil Industry*, p. 222.

eliminated earlier reliance on charcoal in all but the most inaccessible areas of population.

The increasing prosperity of the country resulted in a growing internal consumption of petroleum products in comparison with other sources of energy. Associated with this was the extension of the pipeline network to cover more of the country, some 4,500 kms in 1976, and the construction of new refineries in Tehran (1968 and 1974), Shīrāz (1973), Tabrīz (1974) and Iṣfahān. Between 1950 and 1979 there was an enlargement of distribution operations (see Table 4). By 1976 some 8,000 NIOC employees were engaged, practically half the workforce, in distribution activities, which were administratively divided into five main areas, of which the northern area took two thirds of the four major products. An analysis of Iranian oil demand between 1960 and 1974 shows an annual growth rate of 13% overall with residential and commercial usage predominating, followed by an increasing share of the industrial sector and a fairly constant share taken by road transport. Some idea of the volume and range of products refined with their respective deliveries for exports or their supply for internal consumption from 1957 to 1972 may be gained from Appendix 7. In 1978 domestic refinery throughput was:

Ābādān	479,000 b/d
Tehran	117,000 b/d
Tabrīz	34,000 b/d
Shīrāz	12,000 b/d
Kirmānshāh	13,000 b/d

Complementing these internal activities, NIOC engaged in other activities abroad, going unsuccessfully into partnership in an area of the North Sea with British Petroleum (BP) in 1972. In 1975 it entered another concessionary partnership with BP and others, to explore for oil on the continental shelf of Western Greenland, again without success, but the managerial exposure and experience were useful. The National Iranian Tanker Company was established in 1955, but not until the mid-1970s did it grow with the acquisition of four ocean-going tankers. It ordered two supertankers (230,000 tons dwt each) from Japan and was associated with BP in a joint tanker company in 1976, the Irano-British Shipping Company. At the end of 1978 the fleet included seven vessels, totalling some one million deadweight tons. Besides its exploration and shipping interests, NIOC participated in two joint venture refineries abroad and some distribution activities. Thus in 1969 NIOC took a 14 percent shareholding with AMOCO (14%) and the Indian Government (72%) in the 58,000 b/d

refinery at Madras and had a 24.5% share in the adjacent Madras Fertilizer Company. NIOC had a 17.5% shareholding in the Sasolburg 75,000 b/d refinery in South Africa. In 1974 NIOC exported 1.1m and 1.9m tons of crude oil to these two refineries respectively. Yet, it actually proved more difficult than it seemed to escape from reliance on the Consortium for export sales. A small direct distribution relationship was negotiated with Afghanistan over aviation spirit for the airports at Kabul and Qandahar.

Meantime, another activity associated with the oil industry, indeed part of it, contributing to the general national euphoria of the early 1970s, was the exploitation of the vast gas resources of the country. The National Iranian Gas Company, nominally under the control of NIOC, was established in 1966, but by 1977 along with National Petrochemical Company had become virtually autonomous. For many years gas was separated from oil and flared because it was difficult to handle with its volatile constituents, and there was only a very limited market for its successful utilization. Gradually over the years on an increasing but nonetheless small scale, gas was used in refining and production activities as fuel for furnaces. Slowly gas technology improved and its transportation over long distances under pressure or by liquefaction became possible in commercial quantities. It was also re-injected into the oil reservoirs for secondary recovery. Liquefied gas had been utilized in Iran in 1955 for the first time and in 1963 a 10-inch pipeline supplied gas to Shīrāz from the oil field at Gach Sārān.

In 1966 gas became an important counter in the diplomatic exchanges between Iran and the Soviet Union when an agreement for fifteen years for the export of gas from Iran to Russia was concluded on 13 January at a price of 6 roubles (1 rouble = $1.11) a thousand cu.ft. at Āstārā on the Iranian–Russian border. Under Iranian pressure the Russians subsequently and reluctantly agreed to revisions, bringing the cost up to nearly 20 roubles by 1978. Relations between Iran and the Soviet Union were both close and distant during the last two decades of the Pahlavī period. The Shah visited Moscow in July 1956 but in 1958 he rebuffed Nikita Krushchev over his negotiations for a bilateral pact with the United States and he brusquely dismissed a Russian delegation in early 1959. The Russians riposted with undisguised hostility, but this abated after September 1962, when Iran informed them that "no foreign power will be given the right to have bases for missiles of any type on Iranian soil."

This reassurance was welcome to the Soviet Union and was followed by an Iran–Russian Co-operation Agreement signed on 27 July 1963. The Russians pledged economic assistance in constructing dams with power plants and irrigation facilities, and the building of grain silos on a 12 year credit. This was

acceptable but modest. The Shah was angling for bigger fish and the Russians, after the breach with the Chinese, were looking for more export outlets for their heavy industry. When western companies shied away from the Shah's steel mill project and the World Bank refused funds, at the end of 1964 he invited Russian experts to do a feasibility study, on which they reported favourably.

In mid 1965 the Shah visited Moscow and proposed that the steel mill project, instead of being financed by credits, should be paid for by supplies of gas, which would be delivered to the Soviet Union by a large diameter pipeline from the southern oilfields, from which it would be pumped northwards to the Russian border. The Iranian Gas Trunkline (IGAT) was completed and operational in 1970, with an annual capacity of 10 billion cubic metres up to 1985. An international consortium designed and constructed the facilities, which involved gas gathering centres in the southern oil fields and the construction of a 40–42-inch large, 1100 km pipeline with nine pumping stations from the oilfields northerly through Iran to the Russian border. After the line became operational in 1970 a number of spur lines in 1974 connected cities like Tehran, Isfahān, Ahvāz and the Alburz area with gas supplies from the main trunk line system. Pilot plant locations were also tested for the construction of further lines to village communities and specially designed industrial sites.

The Russians were initially sceptical about the practicality of the project and were doubtful about becoming dependent on Iran for some of their energy supplies, but their own southern supplies of gas for the industrialized regions of Transcaucasia were declining. Thus there were predictable commercial and diplomatic advantages in completing such an advanced development, providing an opportunity for an impressive installation of Russian heavy industry and an example of international collaboration. Gas supplies were also an insurance for the payment of and support for the steel mill, for which the normal trade of the two countries was quite inadequate. For the Shah it was economically preferable to utilize the gas than flare it wastefully. Diplomatically, a sensible flirtation with the Russians would excite some jealousy from the United States. Above all, the gas agreement facilitated the construction of the steel mill, a long coveted industrial undertaking of prestigious pride. It is also undeniable that the amelioration of Iran–Russian relations and economic co-operation was founded upon their mutual interests converging on the gas pipeline.

Another purpose of this expensive and technically difficult project was to diversify domestic energy supplies and provide the basis for the application of an ambitious programme for national gas consumption. Nevertheless, it was of doubtful profit at first, before being revised and until adequate provision was

taken into account for investment costs and the returns based on fuel oil prices. However, with the discoveries of further natural gas reserves in the early 1970s it was decided in 1975 to proceed with another ambitious gas pipeline providing Russia with more gas supplies, which in turn would allow more gas from its more northerly sources to flow to Europe. The capacity of the second pipeline was double the first and estimates for completion were $2–3bn at 1978 prices. Plans and contracts were drawn up on 30 November 1975 and revised later in 1976 to deliver 600 billion cu.ft. from a southern field near Bushire to a consortium of European companies at the Russian border for onward transmission to Europe by Russian pipelines. It was never implemented because the idea was shelved after the establishment of the Islamic Republic. In 1977 the Russians purchased 2.2 million tonnes of oil, an interesting development.

The discovered gas reserves of Iran have enormous potential value to the Iranian economy. They rank second only to those of Russia and exceed the total reserves of all other Middle East countries together. In 1977 gas exports to Russia were 327.0 billion cu.ft. A project for the export of liquefied natural gas (LNG) by Kangān Liquefied Natural Gas Company (Kalingas) originating in 1972 between six foreign partners and NIGC was proceeding in spite of rising costs and the dropping out of most of the foreign partners. Unfortunately, final agreement had not been reached by 1978, after which it was abandoned. Additionally, another major natural gas project was under way in the 1970s to develop the gas reserves discovered at Khāngirān near Sarakhs not far from Mashhad, where initially most of the gas was to be consumed. It has to be remembered that large volumes of gas have also been utilized in gas injection programmes in some of the oil fields to increase oil recovery rates. In 1976 some 18 per cent of all gas produced was reinjected and it had risen to 30 per cent in 1977 (for Iranian gas statistics for 1977 see Appendix 8.)

Thus, Iran was engaging in extremely advanced and massive technical enterprises in association with foreign contractors, but the gestation period was prolonged and their cost effectiveness was doubtful. When the country was afflicted by cash flow problems in the late 1970s, the delay in the returns on investment helped to exacerbate a worsening financial situation and precipitate an economic crisis. Included in this pressure along with the gas ventures was the development of the Iranian petrochemical industry. There was every incentive to participate in the manufacture of petrochemicals, given the availability of natural gas as a feedstock and the waste involved in flaring it, to implement a policy of increasing the added value of exports, to respond to the need to diversify the industrial base and to upgrade the use of oil. So, in 1965 the

National Petrochemical Company of Iran was formed as a subsidiary of NIOC. The first working plant had already been established at Marvdasht near Shīrāz in 1963, the Iran Fertilizer Company, in conjunction with French interests and was opened by General de Gaulle. In the late 1960s a $10bn programme over ten years was planned to establish a major export-led petrochemical industry in Iran in collaboration with foreign interests who would be mostly responsible for technical expertise and marketing skills.

By 1975, apart from the Shīrāz fertilizer plant, there were five other main petrochemical complexes operational and functioning under the control of NPC alone or in collaboration with foreign partners. A massive petrochemical programme costing some $3bn was under way in the late 1970s, including the world's largest contemplated petrochemical investment, a joint Iranian–Japanese venture at Bandar Shāpūr costing $1.833m with an estimated annual production of 3.2 million tons of products. This was not completed at the time of writing but the scale of the project can be imagined from the fact that the total production in 1975 from the existing six plants, Iran Fertilizer Company, Ābādān Petrochemical Company (B.F Goodrich 26%), Shāpūr Chemical Company, Khārg Chemical Company (AMOCO subsidiary of Standard Oil Company, Indiana 50%) and Iran Carbon Company (Cabot Corporation 50%), was producing some 1.79m tons of products. These included urea, ammonium nitrate, nitric acid, soda ash, caustic soda, PVC, sulphur, sulphuric acid, phosphoric acid, propane, butane and carbon black, most of which was consumed domestically. Some five private companies, mostly with some foreign investment, for the manufacture of polyester, nylon and acrylic fibres, resins and moulding compounds were operating by 1979.

All these formidable projects (which encountered financial, constructional and manpower problems) were part of the industrialized base of the "Great Civilization". It is, in retrospect, easy to be cynical about the realization of this advanced and far-reaching industrial ambition. There was a strong element of national pride which regarded the advice to adopt intermediate technology as an insult. The confidence of most Iranian forecasters coincided with the conviction of most foreign contractors and investors in continuing economic growth. There was some caution about, but little warning of an impending depression, which would threaten Iranian financial calculations and disturb economic prospects. Up to 1976 there was almost a global conspiracy of optimism. Then the attractions of instant industrialization began to fade in the face of the escalating cost and the capital-intensive nature of the undertakings, compounded by the shortage of skilled manpower and additional expenditure on the

necessary energy, administrative and social infrastructure on largely "green" sites. On a minor scale this would have been a private inconvenience but with state involvement the repercussions were more penetratingly critical. Moreover, the advanced technology, the capital requirements and the large market needed induced a higher volume to achieve the economies of scale, and increase the margin of return, setting up a vicious circle of competitive pressures.

There were arguments among the Iranian planners about the opportunity cost factor, and tension in the councils of state over the formulation of an energy policy which, if it existed, might have reconciled the different options proposed. It became politically easier to postpone rather than take decisions, in the hope that it would be possible to spend one's way out of controversial dilemmas. Most economists contend that the planning process failed to perform its function because of the magnitude of its task and the failure in its direction.[35] This was certainly true of the revised Fifth Plan which, practically riderless, galloped out of control with disastrous results for the political economy of the country. In the original plan oil revenues were 47 per cent but rose fivefold in value to 80 per cent in the revised plan (see Table 7, p. 630). Different ministries disagreed on priorities and strength of ministerial personality or accessibility to the Shah became the criterion of budget allocation or personal influence. The administrative machinery was inadequate for the load it was carrying in such a personalized system and political arbitration was too centralized to be effective in such conditions. Factional in-fighting absorbed more attention than solving the difficulties of bottlenecks, port congestion, shortages of transportation, scarcity of housing, power cuts etc. Corruption had a corrosive influence.

The moment the modernization programme seemed to be faltering, its opponents siezed the opportunity to show their opposition to the abandonment of the traditional employment of economic resources and power in the bazaar, or to make the Shah responsible for the economic downturn which had occurred. It is perhaps the final paradox of the Pahlavī period that it was the oil revenues which ushered in the modernizing achievements of Riżā Shāh, but it was an excess of those revenues which presaged the decline and fall of its over ambitious and over personalized régime. It was ironical that the oil workers, who were regarded as patriotic in mounting strikes against APOC in 1929 and AIOC in 1946 and 1951, were prominent among those who gave the *coup de grâce* to the Shah's government at the end of 1978.[36] The curtailment of oil exports began in

[35] Moghtader, "The Impact".

[36] Fesharaki, "Revolution and Energy Policy". See also Bijan Mossavar-Rahmani, *Revolution and Energy Policies in Iran.*

late October 1978 because of unrest at the Khārg Island and Lavan terminals, when workers protested at the imposition of martial law and called for the replacement of foreign technicians by those from Iran. To underline the message one such technician was murdered. The September average production of 6.1m b/d fell to 1.4m b/d in the first half of November, recovered to 3.5m b/d and then gradually dropped throughout December, when offshore production stopped. Exports ceased on 26 December and by the beginning of January 1979 production was only averaging about 250,000 b/d for internal purposes. This caused industrial disruption and the virtual cessation of supplies for transportation. It was a significant demonstration of industrial strength and political opposition, indicating the plight of the Shah when set against the previous successful period.

It would be tempting, but probably unfair, to see the Iranian oil industry as a symbol of progress and nemesis for the Pahlavī period. It had served as a national broom sweeping away a resented foreign presence, but whilst that may have been politically desirable, it was not really feasible for long, given the general levels of technical education in Iran. It might once have been possible to have praised the oil industry for its triumph of modernization over the traditional approach to economic affairs, but neither of these judgments reaches to the heart of the matter. For all the attempts of both Shahs and their advisers to promote the idea that Iran could pursue policies of grandeur with little reference to the rest of the world, the oil industry is in the highest degree international and interdependent, subject to the principles of supply and demand, even if these might be manipulated for short periods. Many of the problems and opportunities of the Iranian oil industry were comparable and similar to those in other countries at different times.

It was certainly obvious in the mid 1970s, and to some even before, that too much was being attempted too quickly. Unfortunately a *rentier*-type political economy frequently takes for granted its productive base without paying sufficient attention to industrial productivity, managerial competence and agricultural enterprise and, unduly complacent towards its own success, seldom contemplates the problems of the future. When the whole process is compressed into an unrealistic timescale and financially dependent upon a single resource, whose price is ultimately influenced by market forces, there is the possibility of the spinning-top of national economy slowing down, wobbling or falling over.

When oil revenues began to decline in the middle 1970s and when national expenditure was at its greatest and the pressure on national resources unprecedented, it was not just the demurrage charges at Iranian ports or the bottlenecks in transportation which affected the economy and dispelled the myth of continu-

ous progress. It also involved the failure of power supplies in the capital, which stopped the lifts and ruined the contents of the deep freezes, spoiling the lifestyle of the privileged. These developments lead to frustration and disillusion with the proclaimed objectives of the "Great Civilization". This programme, the centrepiece of the Shah's achievement, was funded upon massive financial investment almost wholly derived from oil revenues. It exacerbated the effects of an infrastructure inadequate to cope with the prodigious projects envisaged, accelerating inflation and precipitating social deprivation that resulted from serious migration from the rural areas to towns in search of employment in industry and services, to the neglect of agriculture.

The resulting stresses and strains, coupled with political insensitivity which encountered determined opposition, were a major factor in the collapse of the monarchy.[37] Oil was both the trump card and joker in the Pahlavī hand; a mixed blessing.[38] Whatever the glamour of its political power, oil is essentially a commercial commodity in the exchange of trade. The question posed by the Shah in October 1976 remains a problem for Iran: "What, then is going to take the place of our oil? What is going to replace our oil income, which now enables us to give so many services to the nation?" Oil was the catalyst in the national development of modern industralized Iran during the Pahlavī period.

[37] Robert E. Looney, especially chapter 6, "Economic Dynamics of Oil Revenues", pp. 90–118. On the other hand, for example, politico-religious reasons are given in Nikki R. Keddie, *Roots of Revolution* and *idem.*, *Iran, Religion, Politics and Society: Collected Essays* (London 1980), especially Chapter 8, "Oil Economic Policy and Social Change in Iran", pp. 207–39.

[38] Amuzegar extends the consideration of the problem beyond Iran and suggests that "The sweet dreams about sociopolitical integrity, middle class solidarity, and genuine technological progress still remain to be fulfilled": "Oil Wealth", p. 168. "The oil price increase was a catastrophe for Iran" a wise Iranian banker told the British ambassador, Sir Anthony Parsons in mid-1974, *The Pride and the Fall, Iran 1974–1979* (London, 1984), p. 10. In a cautionary assessment Fred Halliday concluded that Iran's oil-lead growth in 1979 "though not inevitably catastrophic is certainly far from optimistic", *Iran: Dictatorship and Development*, p. 140.

Appendix 1. *Production of petroleum – Middle East 1952–80*

	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960	1961
Iran	1.0	1.0	3.0	16.1	26.4	35.6	40.4	45.7	58.5	58.5
Iraq	19.0	28.0	30.1	32.8	21.7	35.2	41.4	46.7	48.2	48.4
Kuwait	37.1	43.0	47.0	53.9	54.1	56.4	69.1	68.4	80.6	81.4
Neutral Zone		-	1.1	1.3	1.7	3.4	4.2	6.0	7.2	9.3
Qatar	—	—	4.9	5.4	5.8	6.5	8.1	7.8	8.1	8.2
Saudi Arabia	40.0	41.0	46.1	46.8	47.9	48.2	49.3	53.3	61.1	68.1
Abu Dhabi	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Other Middle East	5.0	5.0	1.5	1.5	1.6	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.2	3.0
Total Middle East	97.0	113.0	133.7	157.8	168.1	173.4	208.3	224.4	257.7	275.9
Middle East as percent of World	15.18	16.8	18.9	19.9	19.6	19.1	22.5	22.4	23.9	24.0
World	639.0	674.0	708.1	792.4	860.0	905.8	928.8	1002.8	1079.4	1149.9

	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971
Iran	65.0	72.6	83.5	95.0	105.1	129.3	142.2	168.1	190.7	227.0
Iraq	55.8	55.8	60.6	64.4	68.0	60.1	74.3	74.9	76.9	83.5
Kuwait	90.7	95.7	105.0	109.1	114.4	115.2	122.1	129.5	137.5	147.1
Neutral Zone	12.8	16.2	19.1	19.4	22.3	21.7	22.1	23.3	26.0	28.3
Qatar	8.7	9.0	8.8	11.1	13.8	15.4	16.3	17.0	17.7	20.5
Saudi Arabia	74.6	79.8	85.0	100.6	119.4	129.2	140.9	148.6	176.2	223.4
Abu Dhabi	—	—	—	13.5	17.3	18.3	24.0	28.9	33.4	44.9
Other Middle East	5.1	5.1	12.2	3.0	3.3	3.6	5.2	9.5	14.1	16.2
Total Middle East	303.2	334.2	374.2	416.6	463.6	492.8	547.1	604.2	672.5	790.9
Middle East as percent of World	24.3	24.9	25.8	26.6	27.9	27.1	27.5	28.1	28.6	30.3
World	1246.6	1340.3	1450.0	1564.3	1695.9	1821.5	1990.4	2147.0	2352.8	2609.6

	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980
Iran	251.9	293.2	301.2	267.7	295.0	283.5	262.3	158.1	73.7
Iraq	72.1	99.0	96.7	111.0	118.0	115.2	125.7	170.6	130.2
Kuwait	153.0	140.4	116.3	94.0	98.2	81.5	97.0	113.2	71.5
Neutral Zone	29.3	27.6	28.0	25.8	24.4	20.8	23.9	29.4	27.8
Qatar	23.2	27.3	24.9	21.0	23.9	21.6	23.6	24.7	23.0
Saudi Arabia	287.2	367.9	412.4	343.9	421.6	455.0	409.8	469.9	493.0
Abu Dhabi	50.6	62.6	67.7	67.3	76.8	80.0	69.7	70.2	64.8
Other Middle East	9.5	9.0	9.9	12.8	13.1	12.2	11.9	11.7	11.2
Total Middle East	876.8	1027.0	1057.1	943.5	1071.8	1079.8	1023.9	1047.8	895.2
Middle East as percent of World	33.3	35.8	36.7	34.5	36.3	35.2	33.1	32.5	29.1
World	2633.8	2871.7	2879.2	2733.1	2954.3	3066.7	3094.1	3225.0	3080.5

Source: BP statistical review of the world oil industry.

Appendix 2. *Crude production and royalties from Persian oil 1913–50*

Financial Year Ending	Crude Production Tons	Royalties (£)
Financial Year 1913	80,800	4,150
Financial Year 1914	273,635	20,581
Financial Year 1915	375,977	33,211
Financial Year 1916	449,394	51,925
Financial Year 1917	644,074	146,734
Financial Year 1918	897,402	418,627
Financial Year 1919	1,106,415	605,324
Financial Year 1920	1,385,301	468,718
Financial Year 1921	1,743,557	585,290
Financial Year 1922	2,327,221	593,429
Financial Year 1923	2,959,028	533,251
Financial Year 1924	3,714,216	411,322
Financial Year 1925	4,333,933	830,754
Financial Year 1926	4,556,157	1,053,929
Financial Year 1927	4,831,800	1,400,269
Financial Year 1928	5,357,800	502,080
9 months		
31st Dec. 1928	4,289,733	529,085
1 year		
31st Dec. 1929	5,460,955	1,436,764
31st Dec. 1930	5,939,302	1,288,312
31st Dec. 1931	5,750,498	1,339,132
31st Dec. 1932	6,445,808	1,525,383
31st Dec. 1933	7,086,706	1,812,442
31st Dec. 1934	7,537,372	2,189,853
31st Dec. 1935	7,487,697	2,220,648
31st Dec. 1936	8,198,119	2,580,205
31st Dec. 1937	10,167,795	3,545,313
31st Dec. 1938	10,195,371	3,307,478
31st Dec. 1939	9,583,285	4,270,814
31st Dec. 1940	8,626,639	4,000,000
31st Dec. 1941	6,605,320	4,000,000
31st Dec. 1942	9,399,231	4,000,000
31st Dec. 1943	9,705,769	4,000,000
31st Dec. 1944	13,274,243	4,464,438
31st Dec. 1945	16,839,490	5,624,308
31st Dec. 1946	19,189,551	7,131,669
31st Dec. 1947	20,194,836	7,103,792
31st Dec. 1948	24,871,058	9,172,269
31st Dec. 1949	26,806,564	13,489,271
31st Dec. 1950	31,750,147	16,031,735

Source: BP.

Appendix 3. *Anglo-Persian oil company staff and labour in Persia 1919–27*

Year	Iranians	Indians	British	Others	Total
(a) ABADAN					
1919	806	2,499	36	38	3,379
1920	1,080	2,687	71	35	3,873
1921	1,608	3,313	99	51	5.071
1922	4,941	2,679	100	1,048	8,768
1923	7,336	2,654	220	379	10,589
1924	6,521	2,782	303	454	10,060
1925	6,862	3,001	402	4,405	14,670
1926	7,946	2,161	428	1,442	11,977
1927	10,171	2,062	527	1,273	14,033
(b) FIELDS					
1919	3,173	119	44	9	3,345
1920	2,788	323	81	—	3,192
1921	4,536	730	105	—	5,371
1922	7,632	807	218	212	8,869
1923	8,290	1,099	239	194	9,822
1924	8,617	1,155	282	117	10,171
1925	6,348	1,140	464	2,136	10,088
1926	6,033	842	431	2,727	10,033
1927	5,103	661	334	2,579	8,677
(c) AHVAZ AND ON THE PIPELINE					
1919	—	23	37	—	60
1920	4,579	606	92	—	5,277
1921	2,865	666	67	—	3,598
1922	2,226	635	96	1,238	4,195
1923	2,472	682	90	27	3,271
1924	1,692	534	71	19	2,316
1925	1,647	494	73	191	2,405
1926	1,375	328	73	642	2,418
1927	1,522	281	70	1,120	2,933
GRAND TOTAL					
1919					6,784
1920					12,342
1921					14,040
1922					26,156
1923					26,970
1924					24,501
1925					28,905
1926					26,493
1927					29,223

Source: BP.

Appendix 4. *Anglo-Persian oil company employees, Iran, 1928–51*

	Iranian	Indian	British	Others	Total Employees
1928	16,382	3,050	1,000	5,365	25,797
1929	15,245	2,518	980	5,273	24,016
1930	20,095	2,411	1,191	7,549	31,246
1931	14,797	1,675	989	3,178	20,639
1932	10,343	1,420	744	2,346	14,853
1933	15,941	795	749	277	17,762
1934	22,020	925	901	254	24,100
1935	25,450	954	1,035	119	27,558
1936	24,948	779	1,055	76	26,858
1937	30,779	786	1,185	66	32,816
1938	45,978	1,342	1,524	84	48,928
1939	34,938	1,154	1,234	69	37,395
1940	26,484	1,158	1,056	15	28,713
1941	28,035	1,005	918	9	29,967
1942	41,081	1,716	1,261	234	44,292
1943	44,944	2,102	1,442	279	48,767
1944	60,073	2,493	1,710	476	64,752
1945	60,294	2,784	1,886	—	64,964
1946	60,807	2,557	1,869	—	65,402
1947	66,624	2,473	2,105	—	71,315
1948		4,551			79,292
1949	76,995	2,126	2,489	—	81,610
1950	78,853	1,979	2,729	—	83,561
1951	72,681	1,642	2,743	—	77,066

Source: BP.

Appendix 5. *APOC/AIOC Iranian sales 1933–51*

All figures in tons

Year	Aviation fluid/ spirits	White and special spirits	Motor spirit	Kerosines	Diesel oil	Admiralty fuel	Furnace oil	Gas oil	Asphalt	Long tons	Total
1933	273	—	26,070	20,621	1,131	10,221	55	183	—		58,554
1934	536	—	35,881	30,423	1,616	8,630	2,489	1,585	—		81,160
1935	824	—	41,586	30,776	1,415	12,993	1,260	3,402	—		92,276
1936	904	—	54,006	38,199	3,175	17,890	1,582	7,790	433		123,979
1937	1,027	2	68,090	43,667	2,923	19,940	1,817	10,477	1,577		149,520
						Fuel oil					
1938	1,235	1	67,488	46,491		32,591		11,082	2,047		160,935
1939	1,393	7	65,084	60,804		79,588		17,118	5,682		229,676
1940	1,082	33	66,452	63,475		115,180		20,254	6,055		272,531
1941 Iran	923	43	69,125	65,161		98,315		20,403	5,892	259,862	
Local Sales ex Abadan	1,882	17	51	353		22,413		291	6,316	31,269	
Forces	(73)	—	12,229	377		56		94	354	13,037	304,168
1942 Iran	535	42	75,112	62,657		141,892		23,663	3,882	305,783	
Local Sales ex Abadan	16	14	75	699		23,125		239	29,912	54,050	
Forces	42,194	1	56,026	6,734		27,421		6,493	37	138,906	498,739
1943 Iran	692	46	86,674	72,828		205,219		37,437	1,237	404,133	
Local Sales ex Abadan	—	—	66	187		27,876		192	223	28,544	
Forces	76,338	—	102,778	6,129		38,785		20,286	57,363	301,679	734,356
1944 Iran	342	237	82,281	82,851		258,356		52,501	1,574	478,142	
Local Sales ex Abadan	23	1	52	217		28,692		270	817	30,072	
Forces	386,382	—	308,665	16,579		21,926		42,290	54,188	830,030	1,338,244

Appendix 5. (*cont.*)

1945 Iran	458	319	70,775	94,918		244,054		32,341	2,773	445,838	
Local Sales ex Abadan	29	1	24	205		25,924		321	542	27,046	
Forces	252,238	761	56,387	10,266		10,887		18,569	39,040	388,148	861,032
1946 Iran	1,434	430	99,819	106,370		230,722		26,138	6,435	471,348	
Local Sales ex Abadan	34	5	34	215		28,439		547	390	29,664	
Forces	20,619	—	2,074	854		177		1,358	2,239	27,321	528,333
1947 Iran	2,361	611	117,754	125,319		279,987		37,560	13,088	576,680	
Local Sales ex Abadan	41	1	48	253		26,704		662	693	28,402	
Forces	7,742	—	—	299		—	724	235	9,000	614,082	
1948 Iran	3,288	911	127,832	156,899		337,092		47,160	7,758	680,940	
Local Sales ex Abadan	57		67	340		30,819		820	471	32,576	
Forces	(233)	—	—	—		—		18	1,075	800	714,376
1949 Iran	4,778	985	157,010	192,698		375,700		57,093	15,899	804,253	
Local Sales ex Abadan	59	4	67		399		27,349		1,099	75	29,052
Forces	344	—	185	64		40		1,489	2,613	4,735	838,040
1950 Iran	5,362	1,012	176,289	209,138		373,903		69,169	20,544	855,851	
Local Sales ex Abadan	67	8	1,357	3,148		24,441		1,847	1,689	32,601	888,452
1951 Iran	2,554	544	75,482	105,690		184,837		38,352	7,743	415,567	
Local Sales ex Abadan	25	5	845	861		11,170		429	1,842	15,195	430,762

Source: **BP**

Appendix 6. *Crude oil posted prices 1956–77*

	IROP posted prices in $/BBL					
Effective	Abadan		Bandarmashur		Kharg	
date[d]	LT[e]	HY[e]	LT[e]	HY[e]	LT[e]	HY[e]
10. 2.56	1.86	1.67	1.91	—	—	—
28. 5.57	1.99	1.80	2.04	—	—	—
13. 2.59	1.81	1.62	1.86	—	—	—
1. 8.60	1.81	1.62	1.86	—	—	1.67[d]
16. 8.60	1.73	1.58	1.78	—	—	1.63
10.11.65	1.73	1.58	1.78	—	1.79[d]	1.63
1. 4.66	1.73	1.58	—	—	1.79	1.63
21.12.66	1.73	1.58	1.78	—	1.79	1.63
1. 4.67	1.73	1.58	—	—	1.79	1.63
11. 6.67	1.73	1.58	1.78	—	1.79	1.63
14.11.70	1.73	1.67	1.78		1.79	1.72
15. 2.71	2.11	2.075	2.16	—	2.17	2.125
1. 6.71	2.213	2.177	2.264	—	2.274	2.228
20. 1.72	2.401	2.362	2.456	—	2.467	2.417
1. 1.73	2.511	2.471	2.567	2.515[d]	2.579	2.527
1. 4.73	2.657	2.614	2.716	2.661	2.729	2.674
1. 4.73[a]	2.670	2.628	2.730	2.675	2.743	2.687
1. 6.73	2.808	2.764	2.871	2.813	2.884	2.826
1. 7.73	2.863	2.818	2.927	2.868	2.940	2.881
1. 8.73	2.971	2.924	3.037	2.976	3.050	2.989
1.10.73	2.918	2.872	2.983	2.923	2.995	2.936
			N.I.O.C. posted prices			
16.10.73	—	—	5.321	4.969	5.341	4.991
1.11.73	—	—	5.380	5.024	5.401	5.046
27.11.73	—	—	5.380	5.124	5.401	5.146
1.12.73	—	—	5.233	4.985	5.254	5.006
1. 1.74	—	—	11.855	11.614	11.875	11.635
1.10.75	—	—	12.475[b]	12.340	12.495	12.360
14. 2.76[c]	—	—	12.475[b]	12.238	12.495	12.258
9. 6.76	—	—	12.475[b]	12.162	12.495	12.183
1. 1.77	—	—	13.755[b]	13.410	13.774	13.430

[a] Notional prices only, arising on cessation of Geneva Agreement.

[b] Derived prices using differentials as prices were not actually posted, crude not being available for export.

[c] Gravity differentials also changed from .15 cents per 0.1 degree API to .30 cents per 0.1 degree.

[d] First posting.

[e] LT = Light oil; HY = Heavy oil.

Source: IROP

Appendix 7. *Iranian oil production 1957–72*

Product	1957 NIOC Internal	1957 Trading Cos. Export	1957 TOTAL	1958 NIOC Internal	1958 Trading Cos. Export	1958 TOTAL
Aviation Gasoline	159,820	2,053,619	2,213,439	168,720	1,869,450	2,038,170
Lubricating Oil	48,596	—	48,596	38,484	—	38,484
Bitumen	130,872	409,899	540,771	238,959	353,895	592,854
Imshi	28		28	13	—	13
LPG	2,364	—	2,364	4,492	—	4,492
Motor Gasoline	1,379,021	6,563,353	7,942,374	1,612,707	7,602,803	9,215,510
Kerosine	1,997,649	5,387,870	7,835,519	2,039,429	5,467,008	7,506,437
Special Solvent	11,293	335,724	347,017	16,444	395,837	412,281
Vaporizing Oil	8,574	1,265,132	1,273,706	12,178	1,421,754	1,433,932
Gas Oil	1,260,806	4,558,086	5,818,892	1,783,806	4,423,418	6,207,224
Diesel Oil	53,096	3,574,685	3,627,781	53,755	3,203,159	3,256,914
Fuel Oil	223,943	17,051,713	17,275,656	231,440	19,926,811	20,158,251
TOTAL	5,276,062	41,200,081	46,476,143	6,200,427	44,664,135	50,864,562

Product	1959 NIOC Internal	1959 Trading Cos. Export	1959 TOTAL	1960 NIOC Internal	1960 Trading Cos. Export	1960 TOTAL
Aviation Gasoline	136,169	2,459,630	2,595,799	96,601	2,169,686	2,266,287
Aviation Turbine Fuels	122,075	2,185,287	2,307,362	219,757	2,173,850	2,393,607
Lubricating Oils	55,568	—	55,568	47,769	—	47,769
Bitumen	238,432	565,845	804,277	473,227	307,068	780,295
Imshi	41	—	41	8	—	8
LPG	8,742	2	8,744	15,195	11	15,206
Motor Gasoline	1,537,593	7,128,414	8,666,007	1,735,629	8,364,750	10,100,379
Kerosine	2,504,147	5,078,247	7,582,394	2,884,873	4,901,704	7,786,577
Special Solvent	15,093	336,250	351,343	16,515	415,695	432,210
Vaporizing Oil	12,054	1,096,066	1,108,120	9,866	1,180,102	1,189,968
Gas Oil	2,246,021	6,179,992	8,426,013	2,802,132	3,579,807	6,381,939
Diesel Oil	71,829	2,955,340	3,027,169	75,896	3,028,324	3,104,220
Fuel Oil	239,665	19,237,192	19,476,857	205,930	24,276,152	24,582,082
TOTAL	7,187,429	47,222,265	54,409,694	8,583,398	50,497,149	59,080,547

Appendix 7. (*cont.*)

Product	1961 NIOC Internal	1961 For Members	1961 TOTAL	1962 NIOC Internal	1962 For Members	1962 TOTAL
Aviation Gasoline	81,810	2,045,454	2,127,264	90,666	2,545,104	2,635,770
Aviation Turbine Fuels	276,120	1,804,248	2,080,368	415,584	2,455,644	2,871,228
Lubricating Oils	68,034	—	68,034	65,082	—	65,082
Bitumen	555,186	292,896	848,082	237,192	445,008	682,200
Imshi	—	-	—	—	—	—
LPG	24,186	—	24,186	35,424	—	35,424
Motor Gasoline	1,811,154	5,430,006	7,241,160	1,876,104	6,467,106	8,343,210
Kerosine	3,412,716	3,404,592	6,817,308	3,375,600	4,070,694	7,446,294
Special Solvent	22,632	355,212	377,844	23,766	601,986	625,752
Vaporizing Oil	11,382	861,384	872,766	11,358	1,016,730	1,028,088
Gas Oil	3,159,462	4,081,620	7,241,082	3,378,918	5,517,738	8,896,656
Diesel Oil	61,764	2,157,012	2,218,776	24,162	2,347,674	2,371,836
Fuel Oil	338,190	21,471,936	21,810,126	144,984	25,155,324	25,300,803
TOTAL	9,822,636	41,904,360	51,726,966	9,678,840	50,623,008	60,301,848

Product	1963 NIOC Internal	1963 Members	1963 TOTAL	1964 NIOC Internal	1964 Members	1964 TOTAL
Aviation Gasoline	103,506	2,370,360	2,473,866	82,422	2,470,962	2,553,384
Aviation Turbine Fuels	408,606	3,092,154	3,500,760	465,594	3,282,600	3,748,194
Lubricating Oil	77,936		77,936	127,404	-	127,404
Bitumen	218,010	290,406	508,416	288,294	293,262	581,556
Imshi	—	—	—	—		—
LPG	49,590	—	49,590	70,572	—	70,572
Motor Gasoline	1,624,482	6,845,082	8,469,564	1,942,536	5,676,948	7,619,484
Kerosine	3,569,340	3,529,452	7,098,792	4,514,370	3,460,596	7,974,966
Special Solvent	35,616	593,628	629,244	31,320	639,744	671,064
Vaporizing Oil	8,928	841,836	850,764	8,484	825,590	834,074
Gas Oil	3,632,586	5,020,236	8,652,822	4,311,306	4,443,468	8,754,774
Diesel Oil	528	2,076,300	2,076,828	1,932	1,663,104	1,665,036
Fuel Oil	112,284	26,667,456	26,779,740	91,212	27,519,228	27,610,440
TOTAL	9,841,412	51,326,910	61,168,322	11,935,446	50,275,502	62,210,948

Appendix 7. (*cont.*)

Product	1965 NIOC Internal	1965 Members	1965 TOTAL	1966 NIOC Internal	1966 Members	1966 TOTAL
Aviation Gasoline	118,800	3,006,816	3,125,616	131,136	3,045,582	3,176,718
Aviation Turbine Fuels	478,458	4,300,920	4,779,378	562,764	4,801,530	5,364,294
Lubricating Oil	142,974	-	142,974	177,708	5,544	183,252
Bitumen	382,542	146,148	528,690	478,968	202,410	681,378
Imshi	—		—	—	—	—
LPG	99,174	—	99,174	147,282	—	147,282
Motor Gasoline	1,823,592	5,364,750	7,188,342	2,084,700	5,748,978	7,833,678
Kerosine	4,241,100	2,425,428	6,666,528	4,570,710	1,980,126	6,550,836
Special Solvent	26,166	532,932	559,098	55,944	456,612	512,556
Vaporizing Oil	8,820	648,510	657,330	7,752	942,600	950,352
Gas Oil	5,388,960	4,682,286	10,071,246	5,787,798	4,473,078	10,260,876
Diesel Oil[1]	2,532	1,118,232	1,120,764	2,946	1,000,680	1,003,626
Fuel Oil[2]	73,080	28,400,844	28,473,924	106,866	28,316,890	28,323,756
Naphtha	—	206,964	206,964	—	322,056	322,056
TOTAL	12,786,198	50,833,830	63,620,028	14,114,574	51,196,086	65,310,660

Note: Deliveries to Members and NIOC exclude use by IORC, NIOC (Non-Basic) and IOE and PC.
[1]Diesel Fuel and Fuel Oil to Members represent cargo and bunker deliveries from Abadan, Bandar Māhshahr (Maʿshūr) and Kharg.
[2]Deliveries to NIOC of (803,094 barrels of fuel oil were made in December 1965) (1,291,066 barrels of fuel oil were made in December 1966) from IOE and PC Topping Plants and are excluded from above figures.

Product	1967 NIOC Internal	1967 Members	1967 TOTAL	1968 NIOC Internal	1968 Members	1968 TOTAL
Aviation Gasoline	164,496	2,993,304	3,157,800	, 158,892	3,090,432	3,249,324
Aviation Turbine Fuels	697,566	4,435,524	5,133,090	688,560	5,580,072	6,268,632
Lubricating Oil	161,586	—	161,586	174,270	—	174,270
Bitumen	632,436	306,132	938,568	505,074	321,840	826,914
Imshi	—		—		—	
LPG	220,098	—	220,098	264,828	-	264,828
Motor Gasoline	2,215,074	3,692,760	5,907,834	1,196,538	4,682,286	5,878,824
Kerosine	5,127,288	1,563,408	6,690,696	4,792,452	2,269,788	7,062,240
Special Solvent	34,170	470,004	504,174	47,802	488,784	536,586
Vaporizing Oil	7,578	867,558	875,136	6,582	859,326	865,908
Gas Oil	6,896,874	3,799,350	10,696,224	6,814,452	4,496,580	11,311,032

Appendix 7. (*cont.*)

Product	1967 NIOC Internal	1967 Members	1967 TOTAL	1968 NIOC Internal	1968 Members	1968 TOTAL
Diesel Oil[1]	3,006	943,824	946,830	13,866	847,164	861,030
Fuel Oil[2]	116,778	30,439,440	30,556,218	210,222	28,082,652	28,292,874
Naphtha	—	925,200	925,200	—	945,288	945,288
Cat Reformate		1,477,320	1,477,320	—	2,037,372	2,037,372
TOTAL	16,276,950	51,913,824	68,190,774	14,873,538	53,701,584	68,575,122

Note:
[1]Diesel Fuel and Fuel Oils to Members represent cargo and bunker deliveries from Abadan, Mahshahr and Kharg.
[2]Deliveries to NIOC of (1,099,688 barrels of Fuel Oil were made in December 1967) (422,189 barrels of Fuel Oil were made in December 1968) from IOE and PC Topping Plants and are excluded from above table.

Product	1969 NIOC Internal	1969 Members	1969 TOTAL	1970 NIOC Internal	1970 Members	1970 TOTAL
Aviation Gasoline	123,420	3,169,620	3,293,040	89,868	2,913,096	3,002,964
Aviation Turbine Fuels	791,874	5,837,712	6,629,586	630,408	5,431,434	6,061,842
Lubricating Oil	172,758	-	172,758	191,520	—	191,520
Bitumen	608,724	279,624	888,348	562,674	259,524	822,198
Imshi	—	—	—	—	—	—
LPG	235,818	—	235,181	282,666	—	282,666
Motor Gasoline	853,368	4,977,738	5,831,106	883,914	5,574,318	6,458,232
Kerosine	5,298,810	2,177,046	7,475,856	5,225,976	1,706,406	6,932,382
Special Solvent	47,298	512,730	560,028	46,320	385,230	431,550
Vaporizing Oil	6,474	804,648	811,122	5,232	586,152	591,384
Gas Oil	6,012,960	5,086,650	11,099,610	6,052,206	5,799,156	11,851,362
Diesel Oil[1]	6,756	832,314	839,070	20,100	676,260	696,360
Fuel Oil[2]	159,228	29,416,644	29,575,872	169,014	31,543,446	31,712,460
Naphtha	—	2,478,774	2,478,774	—	2,159,604	2,159,604
Cat Reformate	—	1,189,032	1,189,032	—	681,732	681,732
TOTAL	14,317,488	56,762,532	71,080,020	14,159,898	57,716,358	71,876,256

Note:
[1]Diesel Fuel and Fuel Oil to Members represent cargo and bunker deliveries from Abadan, Mahshahr and Kharg.
[2]Deliveries to NIOC of (502,685 barrels of Fuel Oil were made in December 1969) (519,368 barrels of Fuel Oil were made in December 1970) from IOE and PC Topping Plants and are excluded from above table.

Appendix 7. (*cont.*)

Product	1971 NIOC Internal	1971 Members	1971 TOTAL	1972 NIOC Internal	1972 Members	1972 TOTAL
Aviation Gasoline	73,032	2,491,548	2,564,580	61,356	2,753,628	2,814,984
Aviation Turbine Fuels	769,926	4,808,232	5,578,158	2,128,716	4,506,492	6,635,208
Lubricating Oil	227,274	—	227,274	272,982	—	272,982
Bitumen	811,026	179,844	990,870	630,426	211,776	842,202
Imshi	—	—	—	—	—	
LPG	401,904	—	401,904	432,690	—	432,690
Motor Gasoline	1,568,166	5,580,786	7,148,952	1,750,866	5,369,334	7,120,200
Kerosine	6,574,320	1,735,158	8,309,478	6,202,710	1,186,092	7,388,802
Special Solvent	60,936	408,414	469,350	58,248	410,616	468,864
Vaporizing Oil	5,196	447,672	452,868	4,770	364,998	369,768
Gas Oil	6,412,668	6,517,134	12,929,802	6,789,432	5,252,946	12,042,378
Diesel Oil[1]	14,178	763,470	777,648	25,002	1,019,156	1,054,158
Fuel Oil[2]	271,128	30,333,648	30,604,776	663,954	31,065,246	31,729,200
Naphtha	—	1,568,760	1,568,760	—	1,583,292	1,583,292
Cat Reformate	—	501,174	501,174	—	684,804	684,804
TOTAL	17,189,754	55,335,840	72,525,594	*19,921,152	54,418,380	73,439,532

Note:

[1]Diesel Fuel and Fuel Oil to Members represent cargo and bunker deliveries from Abadan, Mahshahr and Kharg.

[2]Deliveries to NIOC of (589,492 barrels of Fuel Oil were made in December 1971) (608,267 barrels of Fuel Oil were made in December 1972) from IOE & PC Topping Plants and are excluded from above table.

*Excludes 112,391 barrels adjustment on products delivered to NIOC in previous years.

Source: Iranian Oil Refining Company N.V. December monthly reports 1957–72.

Appendix 8. *Iranian gas statistics 1977*

GAS STATISTICS
GAS PRODUCTION AND DISPOSITION: 1977
(Millions of Standard Cubic Feet)

Company	Gas produced	Gas utilized	Gas utilized as % produced	Gas flared
NIOC	10,823	6,000	55.6	4,823
NIOC/OSCO	1,896,595	1,047,433	55.2	849,163
IPAC	99,200	13,732	13.8	85,463
SIRIP	9,020	720	8.0	3,300
LAPCO	28,108	1,371	4.9	26,737
IMINOCO	11,764	1,000	8.5	10,764
NIGC	8,864	8,864	100.0	
TOTAL	2,064,374	1,079,120	52.3	935,255

GAS CONSUMPTION AND EXPORTS: 1977
(Millions of Standard Cubic Feet)

	Amount	Percent
Gas Injection	331,004	30.7
Producers' Fuel	74,166	6.9
Power Generation, Domestic & Commercial	103,789	9.6
Export to USSR via IGAT	326,903	30.3
Abadan Refinery	40,350	3.7
Shahpour Chemical Company	45,833	4.2
Net Deliveries to NGL Plants[1]	75,341	7.0
Net Deliveries to Kharg Petrochemical[2]	19,779	1.8
Transmission and Other Losses	61,955	5.7
TOTAL	1,079,120	100.0

[1]Rich gas delivered (618,063 MMSCF) less lean sour gas available for delivery (542,722 MMSCF).
[2]Rich gas delivered (45,399 MMSCF) less (a) lean gas returned to IPAC (1,706 MMSCF) for use as producers' fuel and (b) lean gas that was flared (23,914 MMSCF).
Source: U.S. Embassy, Tehran.

PART 4:
RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL LIFE, 1721–1979

CHAPTER 19

RELIGIOUS FORCES IN EIGHTEENTH- AND NINETEENTH-CENTURY IRAN

The Safavid period marks an obvious watershed in the religious history of Iran in that it witnesses the elevation of Twelver Shiʿism to the position of state religion and the practical fusion of Iran and Shiʿism into a single religio-national entity. Although the proximate causes of this process are to be sought in a Türkmen military invasion of Iran from the west and north-west, followed by an influx of Shīʿī scholars from Arab lands, there can be no doubt that a species of marriage between Shiʿism and the Iranian national consciousness had been concluded by the close of the Safavid era. The marriage has proved lasting, and its effects irreversible. Yet the precise content of the Shīʿī-Iranian identity and the forms of expression that were to be assumed by Shiʿism on Iranian soil were not fully formulated in the Safavid period. Indeed, it was only when the Safavids were driven from the scene in the first quarter of the 18th century that Iranian Shiʿism became emancipated from all essential dependence on the state, and was able to embark on a process of self-elaboration and internal differentiation that makes of the post-Safavid period one of great interest and richness. The 18th century has been called "by far the blackest period in the history of Islamic Iran",[1] and the anarchy that prevailed throughout much of the period goes some way to justifying this judgement. The 19th century, too, was one of almost uninterrupted socio-political decline, arrested only by the beginnings of westernizing reform. Yet the vitality of religious thought and interest during the same period indicates that there is no simple correlation between the two spheres of life and activity.

The decline of the Safavid state in the late 17th century coincided with the career of one of the most prodigious scholars of the whole period, Mullā Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī (d. 1110/1699), whose vast compendium of Imamite *ḥadīth*, *Biḥār al-Anwār*, is one of the chief monuments of all Shīʿī scholarship. Not

[1] Aubin, "La politique religieuse des Safavides", p. 241.

only in the capital of Iṣfahān, where Majlisī and his pupils lived, but also in a host of provincial centres, learning continued to flourish into the early decades of the 18th century. The remarkable discipline of *ḥikmat* – a fusion of the esoteric dimension of Shiʿism with Neo-Platonism and the Sufism of Ibn ʿArabī – was cultivated by such figures as Maulānā Muḥammad Ṣādiq Ardistānī and Jamāl al-Dīn Khwānsārī, as an adjunct to the exoteric sciences of religion.[2]

In one respect, however, the destinies of Shīʿī scholarship and the Safavid state in the early 18th century were intertwined. There took place a recrudescene of the same militant hostility to Sunnī Islam that had marked the beginning of the Safavid dominion, and this proved fateful both for the dynasty and for the centres of learning it had established and patronized. Since military realities precluded an attack on the Ottomans, the main target of sectarian hatred was furnished by Sunnī minorities living on the fringes of the Safavid realm: the Kurds, Balūchīs and above all the Afghans. As if to make matters deliberately worse, the instrument chosen for the affliction of the Afghans consisted of Georgian mercenaries, either Christian or only superficially Islamized. When Mīr Vais, leader of the Ghilzai Afghans centred on Qandahar, visited Iṣfahān in 1120/1707, he was exposed to insult as a Sunnī. He travelled on to Mecca, taking with him certain Shīʿī books that contained matter abhorrent to Sunnīs. Showing these to the scholars at the Kaʿba, he obtained a *fatvā* authorizing rebellion against the Safavids.[3] The rebellion began with a slaughter of the Shīʿī minority in Qandahar, and ended with the capture and destruction of the Safavid capital in 1135/1722, and the virtual extinction of the Safavid dynasty.

Iranian Shiʿism thus lost the dynasty that had fostered it, and for the first time since the brief reign of Ismāʿīl II (984/1576–985/1577), who had manifested proto-Sunnī tendencies,[4] the supremacy of Shiʿism was placed in doubt. During their brief and unstable rule, the Afghan conquerors sought to have their control of Iran legitimized by the approval of the Ottomans, and even hinted at caliphal ambitions, claiming descent from the Quraish.[5] Nādir Shāh, who displaced the Afghans and initially acted in the name of the Safavids, posed a more persistent challenge to Shīʿī hegemony in Iran by seeking a revision of the very nature of Shiʿism.

Nādir Shāh first adumbrated his proposed reforms at the gathering he convened on the plain of Mughān on the occasion of his self-elevation to the

[2] Muḥammad ʿAlī Ḥazīn, pp. 95–6.

[3] See Laurence Lockhart, *The Fall of the Ṣafavī Dynasty*, p. 86; Muḥammad Mahdī Iṣfahānī, *Niṣf-i Jahān*, p. 183.

[4] See Walter Hinz, "Schah Esmaʿil II: ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Safaviden".

[5] Ismail Hakkı Uzunçarşılı, p. 183; ʿAbbās al-ʿAzzāwī, *Tārīkh al-ʿIrāq* v, p. 218.

throne in 1148/1736. He declared that his exercise of rule would require abandonment by the Shīʿīs of two of the practices traditionally most offensive to Sunnī sentiment: the ceremonial vilification of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar, as well as other Companions of the Prophet, and rejection of the legitimacy of the first three Caliphs. Purged of these excrescences, Shiʿism was henceforth to be known as the Jaʿfarī *maẕhab*, both to efface the connotations of sectarianism the word Shīʿī inevitably carried, and to facilitate the absorption of the reformed school into the main body of Islam as a fifth Sunnī maẕhab. "This Shīʿī maẕhab, which is contrary to that of our noble forebears, must be abandoned. Since, however, his excellency the Imām Jaʿfar ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq, upon whom be peace, is a true Imām [*imām ba ḥaqq*], let the Iranians follow the path of that excellent one in the branches of the Law [*furūʿāt-i sharʿiyya*]."[6]

Coercion and fear were able to secure at least outward compliance. At Mughān, only Mīrzā Abu ʾl-Hasan Mullābāshī was imprudent enough to object, and even he thought he had voiced his opposition in private. Denounced by a spy, he was put to death.[7] It is to be presumed that the consent of the *ʿulamā* to Nādir's proposals was made possible by their recourse to traditional *taqīya* (prudential dissimulation). None of them ventured to write in support of Nādir's measures, and the *mullābāshī* he appointed, Mullā ʿAlī Akbar Ṭālaqānī, appears to have been a man of little scholarly accomplishment, recommended to the sovereign chiefly by his pliancy and willingness to serve. He shared his master's fate, being assassinated on the same day in 1160/1747.[8]

Even a more active espousal of his religious policies by the Iranian ʿulamā would not have fully satisfied Nādir Shāh, for he also sought recognition of the Jaʿfarī maẕhab by the Ottomans as a legitimate and authentic school of *fiqh* and an equal of the four Sunnī maẕhabs. This external dimension of his religious policies first became apparent in the peace negotiations with the Ottomans that came soon after the coronation at Mughān. It was demanded of Genç Ali Paşa, the Ottoman envoy, that the Ottomans should recognize the Jaʿfarī maẕhab and as outward sign of their recognition permit the erection of a fifth *maqām* ("station") at the Kaʿba, similar to the maqāms of the Sunnī schools. A related demand was that the Ottomans should permit a separate *ḥajj* caravan to convey Iranian pilgrims to Mecca, under the command of an Iranian *amīr al-ḥajj*.[9]

Mullā ʿAlī Akbar Ṭālaqānī accompanied Genç Ali Paşa to Istanbul for further

[6] Mīrzā Mahdī Khān Astarābādī, *Tārīkh-i Jahāngushā-yi Nādirī*, p. 270.
[7] Muḥammad Kāẓim, *Tārīkh-i ʿĀlam-ārā-yi Nādirī* II, p. 31
[8] Muḥammad Ḥirz al-Dīn, *Maʿārif al-Rijāl* I, p. 190.
[9] Astarābādī, *op. cit.*, p. 26; and the same author's *Durra-yi Nādirī*, pp. 597–9.

discussion of the matter with representatives of the Ottoman ʿulamā. Eight sessions took place in this initial exchange of views, but no sign emerged of Ottoman willingness to accede to Nādir's demands. He repeated them on several occasions and delegations travelled back and forth between Istanbul and Iran. At no time, however, was it even likely that the Ottomans would recognize the Jaʿfarī maẕhab, although at one point Koca Ragıp Paşa, the *reis ül-küttâb*, seemed attracted by the possibility of a permanent end to sectarian warfare with Iran.[10] Traditions of hostility ran deep, and as late as 1135/1723, the Ottoman Şeyhülislâm had declared, in support of a campaign against Iran, that the blood of male Shīʿīs might be legitimately shed and their children and womenfolk taken captive.[11] The Ottoman ʿulamā found unacceptable a Shiʿism that had been only partially reformed, and that, by the coercive power of the State.

Political considerations were equally important. The Ottomans had refused to legitimize the Afghan conquerors of Iran, despite their indubitable Sunnī affiliations, and they were even more reluctant to permit Nādir Shāh to establish an energetic and expansionist state to their east. His military prowess had proved itself from the Caucasus to Delhi, and with the disability of Shiʿism removed, he might well have aspired to rule over a broad Islamic realm that transcended the frontiers of Iran.

Only in one instance was Nādir Shāh able to obtain Sunnī approval of the Jaʿfarī maẕhab, and apparent recognition of it as the simple equivalent of one of the four Sunnī maẕhabs. During his protracted campaign in Arab Iraq in 1156/1743, Nādir Shāh convened a meeting of Sunnī and Shīʿī ʿulamā at Najaf with the purpose of reconciling the two groups and grafting the branch of the Jaʿfarī maẕhab onto the trunk of Sunnī Islam. The chief spokesman for the Shīʿī ʿulamā was Mullā ʿAlī Akbar Ṭālaqānī, while the Sunnīs were represented by the ʿulamā of Bukhārā and Afghanistan. At Nādir's request, the governor of Baghdad delegated Shaikh ʿAbd-Allāh al-Suwaidī, Ḥanafī *qāẕī* of the city, to observe the discussions and arbitrate between the participants. Argument centered on *mukaffirāt* – matters of Shīʿī doctrine and practice found heretical by the Sunnīs. Four items were mentioned by Hādī Khwāja, qāẕī of Bukhārā; the vilification of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar; the declaration of almost all the Companions to have been apostates; the practice of temporary marriage; and denial of the legitimacy of the first three Caliphs. Mullā ʿAlī Akbar replied that the first two had been abandoned since the beginning of Nādir Shāh's rule; and that temporary

[10] Uzunçarşılı, p. 307. [11] *Ibid.*, pp. 175–6.

marriages were contracted "only by idiots". As for the fourth point, he promised that in future the Shīʿīs would give satisfaction to their Sunnī brethren. After certain other Sunnī arguments and objections had been met, the Shīʿī ʿulamā promised to abandon definitively all that Hādī Khwāja had mentioned, and the Sunnī ʿulamā undertook for their part to cease regarding the Shīʿīs as unbelievers.[12]

In reality, the meeting was quite inconclusive. The Ottoman learned establishment was unrepresented on the Sunnī side, and it is probable that the Sunnī scholars of Bukhārā and Afghanistan were hardly less subject to constraint by Nādir than were their Shīʿī counterparts. It has also been suggested that Nādir deliberately refrained from inviting the most prominent Shīʿī scholars resident in Najaf, preferring instead to rely on his obedient *mullābāshī*.[13] The agreement obtained at Najaf thus represented neither Sunnī nor Shīʿī aspirations; it was merely an attempt at state manipulation of religion.

In 1159/1746, Nādir Shāh finally concluded peace with the Ottomans, renouncing his demand for recognition of the Jaʿfarī maẕhab, and he was assassinated soon after. His successors, who managed for a time to retain control of his capital Mashhad and adjacent areas of Khurāsān, showed no interest in the project of the Jaʿfarī maẕhab, and it died with its originator. Nādir's motives in promoting a revision of Shiʿism may safely be presumed to have been political; there is no evidence of personal piety in his life. He told al-Suwaidī that he intended to lead Iran back to pure Sunnism by stages, but the truth of this may be doubted.[14] One Iranian Sunnī community, the Shāfiʿīs of Lār, certainly regarded him with no sympathy.[15] Although we have suggested that one of the most notable developments of the eighteenth century is the emancipation of Shiʿism from dependence on the state, a certain religiously tinted loyalist sentiment toward the Safavids did persist for some time after the downfall of the dynasty. Traces of it are to be found even in the early nineteenth century. The revision of Shiʿism was one means whereby Nādir might hope to suppress or break that sentiment. His confiscation of the extensive *vaqf* lands around Iṣfahān should be seen in the same light, for it too tended to dissolve a visible link between the religious establishment and the departed Safavid dynasty. It should be mentioned too that the majority of his soldiery was recruited from the Sunnī borderlands of Iran, and it was necessary to accommodate their religious susceptibilities by the suppression of the more objectionable features of Shiʿism.

[12] A detailed account of the occasion is provided by ʿAbd-Allāh al-Suwaidī in *al-Ḥujaj al-Qaṭʿiyya*.
[13] Ḥirz al-Dīn, III, p. 195. [14] al-Suwaidī, p. 25. [15] Ḥazīn, p. 246.

Finally, as the last of the great military conquerors of West Asia, Nādir Shāh doubtless sought to rule over an empire whose population would have been mostly Sunnī; he wished to revise Shiᶜism in the light of that ambition.

His failure is to be attributed not only to political contingencies, but also to the fact that he implicitly demanded abandonment of the very essence of Shiᶜism: its Imamology, with all the spiritual and doctrinal consequences that flow therefrom. To present Jaᶜfar al-Ṣādiq as having been an Imam in the same sense as Abū Ḥanīfa was a verbal sleight of hand that had no chance of passing unnoticed. Concentration on the Imāms as the divinely appointed and charismatic guides of the Shīᶜī community, with a cosmic function that by far transcended the codification of legal principles, continued unabated, and in fact inspired a whole series of new doctrinal definitions and insights that proliferated long after Nādir Shāh's rule had ended.

The unsoundness of his initiative was demonstrated too by the renewed establishment of unrevised Shiᶜism as state religion by the next serious contendant for power in Iran, Karīm Khān Zand. Each of the twelve districts of Shīrāz, Karīm Khān's seat of rule, was held to be under the patronage of one of the Twelve Imams, who was formally commemorated every Thursday evening.[16] Coins were struck in the names of the Imams, and the Friday *khuṭba* began with the invocation of blessings upon them.[17] Welcome though this reassertion of state loyalty to Shiᶜism must have been to the ᶜulamā, it remains true that the close association of state and religion had been irretrievably broken by the downfall of the Safavids. Before the Safavid period, Shiᶜism had existed almost always as a minority persuasion, one infused moreover with esoteric intent. Alliance with the state in the Safavid period had been something of an anomaly, one made necessary for attaining a secure position of hegemony in Iran. Once this position had been reached and autonomy secured, the necessity came to an end. The religious policies of Nādir Shāh and Karīm Khān Zand both served, in their differing ways, to emphasize the permanence and autonomy of Shiᶜism in Iranian soil. From the firm roots it had struck, Shiᶜism continued to put forth numerous branches; and it became apparent that the Shiᶜism of Iran, far from being a maẕhab capable of assimilation with Sunnī Islam, contained within itself a variety of maẕhabs.

First among the instances of internal differentiation that took place in the Shiᶜism of the late 18th and early 19th centuries was that furnished by the

[16] William Francklin, p. 199.

[17] Abuʾl-Ḥasan Gulistāna, p. 460; Mīrzā Ḥasan Ḥusainī Fasāʾī, p. 219.

struggle between the Akhbārī and Uṣūlī schools of fiqh. Their dispute was apparently centred on the principles and methodology of fiqh, and above all on the related issues of *taqlīd* – submission to the directives of the learned in matters of religious law – and *ijtihād* – the exercise of rational judgment by the learned in the application of religious law. The Akhbārīs rejected both principles, holding that the entire community, learned and non-learned alike, should submit exclusively to the guidance of the Imams, and contending that legal reasoning was a borrowing from Ḥanafī fiqh, alien to Shiᶜism and its strong emphasis on the authority of the Imams. The Uṣūlīs by contrast proclaimed the legitimacy of submission to the directives of the learned, and of the practice by them of ijtihād.[18] The outcome of this seemingly technical dispute between the two schools determined the whole spiritual tone of Iranian Shiᶜism as well as its socio-political expression throughout the 19th century, and can even be said to be responsible for certain features of the contemporary religious scene in Iran.

The origins of the Akhbārī-Uṣūlī divide go far back beyond the 18th century. Each side in fact identifies its own position as the perennially authentic doctrine of Shiᶜism, and regards that of the other as an innovation. Akhbārīs have seen in al-Ḥasan ibn Yūsuf ibn Muṭahhar (d. 726/1326) "the first who trod the path of ijtihād", i.e., the first Uṣūlī.[19] It has also been suggested that Usulism originates three centuries earlier with Abū Jaᶜfar al-Ṭūsī (d. 460/1067), who was the first in Shiᶜism to expound the permissibility of *qiyās* (analogical reasoning).[20] On the Uṣūlī side, Mullā Muḥammad Amīn Astarābādī is generally regarded as the founder of Akhbarism: "he it is who first divided this salvation-destined [Shīᶜī] community into Uṣūlī and Akhbārī, and evil was his deed", wrote the 18th-century Uṣūlī scholar, Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī.[21]

It may be said that the Akhbārī and Uṣūlī schools represented two possible responses to the jurisprudential problems caused by the occultation of the Twelfth Imam. When still on the physical plane, the Imam had been the sole authentic source of legal guidance and interpretation, but after his occultation the practical need arose for a new source of direction. One response was to minimize the need by emphasizing the continuing directive function of the Imam despite his absence from the physical plane; given the perpetual link between the Imam and his community, it was not necessary to establish new processes for the elaboration and implementation of the Law, but only to

[18] A detailed discussion of the differences between Akhbārīs and Uṣūlīs is to be found in Gianroberto Scarcia, "Intorno alle controversie tra Aḫbārī e Uṣūlī presso gli Imamiti di Persia".

[19] Muḥammad Amīn Astarābādī, quoted in ᶜAbd al-Nabī al-Kāẓimī, *Takmilat al-Rijāl* I, p. 314.

[20] Corbin, *En Islam Iranien* IV, p. 249.

[21] Shaikh Yūsuf al-Baḥrānī, p. 117.

examine and assimilate the existing sayings and traditions (*akhbār*). This response gradually crystallized as the Akhbarī school. The alternative view was more pragmatically oriented, and saw the need for some institutional guidance of the community, through the use of ijtihād by the learned, in its implementation of religious ordinances. According to this view, the task of the scholar was not merely the investigation of akhbār; legal methodology (*uṣūl*) was of equal importance. Hence the designation of the Uṣūlī maẕhab.

The Akhbārī and Uṣūlī positions remained only partially formulated as long as Shiᶜism maintained its original nature as a minority persuasion and Shīᶜī scholars were not called upon to participate in the administration of a society with a Shīᶜī majority. They became gradually more explicit after the triumph of Iranian Shiᶜism in the Safavid period. It was then that Mīrzā Muḥammad Amīn Astarābādī wrote the chief text of Akhbarism, *al-Fawāʾid al-Madaniyya*, and then too that one of the earliest Uṣūlī refutations of the book, Nūr al-Dīn ᶜĀmilī's *al-Fawāʾid al-Makkiyya*, was written. Throughout most of the period, however, the state dominated the religious institution with little opposition, and the precise role of the learned in matters of law was a question of slight practical importance.

When the nexus between state and religion was severed by the fall of the Safavids, the ᶜulamā came to occupy a position of some influence as leaders of the community, one enhanced by the absence of effective political authority throughout much of the eighteenth century. The Akhbārī and Uṣūlī teachings became correspondingly sharpened through debate and mutual recrimination, and the outcome of their contest was endowed with immediate significance.

The decisive stages of the Akhbārī–Uṣūlī controversy took place outside the borders of Iran, in the traditional Shīᶜī centres of Jabal ᶜĀmil in southern Syria and the ᶜ*atabāt* – shrine cities – of Iraq. The latter sheltered many Iranian scholars who had fled from the instability of the immediate post-Safavid period, and continued indeed to act both as a refuge and as a base of operation for Iranian ᶜulamā throughout the 19th century. The Akhbārīs initially enjoyed a position of complete dominance in the ᶜatabāt, to such an extent that anyone carrying with him books of Uṣūlī fiqh was obliged to cover them up for fear of attack.[22] Their hegemony was brought to an end by the great Uṣūlī scholar, Āqā Muḥammad Bāqir Bihbahānī (1117/1705–1206/1791), a figure of central importance who dominated the religious horizon of Iran at the end of the 18th century much as Mullā Muḥammad Bāqir Majlisī had done at the end of the 17th. Such, indeed,

[22] Muḥammad Bāqir Khwānsārī, p. 123.

was the nature of his achievement that he came to be regarded as the *mujaddid* – the inspired renewer of religious thought and practice – for the twelfth Hijrī century.

He had come to Karbalā in his early youth with his father, and after completing his studies intended to return to Iran. A dream in which the Occulted Imam appeared to him dissuaded him from leaving, and he stayed in Iraq to break the supremacy of the Akhbārīs. The means he employed were various. He wrote a refutation of *al-Fawāʾid al-Madaniyya*, entitling it *al-Fawāʾid al-Uṣūliyya*, and taught a number of pupils who themselves expounded the Uṣūlī position in a number of important works and attained great influence in Iran in the following decades. But at least as effective as his writing and teaching activities was his practical vindication of the function of the religious scholar as arbiter and enforcer of the law. This lesson was learned most effectively by his son, Mīrzā Muḥammad ʿAlī Bihbahānī (d. 1216/1801), of whom Shaikh Jaʿfar al-Najafī (d. 1227/1812) records that he was constantly accompanied by a number of armed men who would immediately execute any judgments that he passed.[23] The example set by the younger Bihbahānī was to be followed by numerous Iranian ʿulamā.

Bihbahānī was the first in the line of great *mujtahid*s – practitioners of ijtihād – that have left their distinctive mark on Iranian history down to the present age. The vindication and elaboration of the principles of taqlīd and ijtihād by him and his successors has provided the Shīʿī community with a living, continuous leadership, fully participating in its historical development and providing guidance and direction in affairs not only personal and religious, but also national and political. The triumph of the Uṣūlī position divided the Shīʿī community into *muqallid* – the one obliged to practise taqlīd – and *mujtahid* – the one entitled to practise ijtihād. According to a recent statement of the matter, "the belief of a Muslim in the principles of the faith must be based on a logical proof, and he may not accept anyone's pronouncement without a proof. Concerning, however, the ordinances [*aḥkām*] of religion, he must either be a mujtahid and be able to deduce the ordinances according to logical proof, or submit to a mujtahid, that is, act according to his instructions."[24] The mujtahid may not claim absolute authority for himself, for the result of ijtihād is never more than *ẓann* – a contestable expression of personal opinion – so that mujtahids may pronounce different or contradictory rulings on the same matter. Since, however, it is incumbent on the muqallid to choose one mujtahid whose

[23] Concerning Bihbahānī, see Algar, *Religion and State*, pp. 34–6; the sources cited there; and Ḥirz al-Dīn, I, pp. 121–3. [24] Ḥusain Ṭabāṭabāʾī Burūjirdī, pp. 2–3.

directives he will follow, in practice the mujtahid comes to enjoy a wide degree of authority. Choice of a mujtahid as source of direction – *marjaʿ-i taqlīd* – depends primarily upon the observation of a superior degree of learning and piety, such as to inspire confidence in his worthiness. If the marjaʿ-i taqlīd dies, it becomes necessary to choose a new one; only the pronouncements of a living mujtahid satisfy the requirement of taqlīd, except in unusual circumstances (for example, lack of access to a living mujtahid, in which case the writings of a deceased marjaʿ-i taqlīd may be referred to). The institution of taqlīd is thus continuously renewed.[25]

Since religious ordinances embrace the political sphere, the function of mujtahid has acquired an important socio-political dimension. As marjaʿ-i taqlīd, the mujtahid is liable to dispense guidance on political matters in a sense opposed to the will of the state, and to become *ipso facto* a leader of opposition. More important still, the institution of monarchy cannot be accommodated in the system of Shīʿī belief in any but the most formal and superficial fashion. Being himself a mere muqallid, the monarch is theoretically bound to make the state the executive branch of ʿulamā authority. This logical consequence of the Uṣūlī distinction between muqallid and mujtahid remained shrouded in the Safavid period, when the monarchy laid claim to religious legitimacy through alleged Imamite descent.[26] The Qājārs, who brought the post-Safavid interregnum to a close at the end of the 18th century, could advance no such claim, nor did they consistently and in good conscience defer to the directives of the mujtahids. One of the dominant themes of Qājār history thus became persistent tension between the monarchy and the ʿulamā, that frequently expressed itself in open confrontation and led ultimately to the participation of an important segment of the ʿulamā in the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–11. The establishment of the Qājār dynasty coincided chronologically with the vindication of the Uṣūlī maẕhab by Bihbahānī and his pupils, but the two phenomena were opposed in fundamental tendency.

Much of this became apparent in the reign of the second Qājār monarch, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh (1212/1797–1250/1834). A brief return to prominence of the Akhbārīs was achieved by Mīrzā Muḥammad Amīn Akhbārī (d. 1233/1818), who apparently achieved by magical means the death of Tsitsianov, commander of the Russian forces besieging Baku during the First Perso-Russian War. But the

[25] For a fuller discussion of these matters, see Algar, *op. cit.*, pp. 6–11.

[26] Instances of rejection of the royal authority by ʿulamā were not however lacking; cf. the exchanges between Shaikh Aḥmad Ardabīlī (d. 922/1584) and Shāh ʿAbbās (Ḥirz al-Dīn, I, pp. 53–6).

opening decades of the 19th century were clearly dominated by the pupils and associates of Bihbahānī: his son, Mīrzā Muḥammad ʿAlī, resident in Kirmānshāh; Shaikh Jaʿfar al-Najafī, principal antagonist of Mīrzā Muḥammad Amīn Akhbārī and author of two important books on Uṣūlī fiqh, *al-Ḥaqq al-Mubīn* and *Kashf al-Ghiṭāʾ*, a resident of Iraq but a yearly visitor to Iran; Shaikh Jaʿfar's son, Muḥammad Ḥasan al-Najafī, author of *Jawāhir al-Kalām*; Ḥājj Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Kalbāsī and Sayyid Muḥammad Bāqir Shaftī, both of Iṣfahān; Sayyid Mahdī Baḥr al-ʿUlūm of Najaf; and Shaikh Abuʾl-Qāsim Qummī of Qum, author of *Qawānīn al-Uṣūl*. The monarch sought their favour through the patronage of shrines and other means, but conflict between State and ʿulamā was already frequent. The mujtahids were instrumental in forcing Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh into his second war with Russia, and obtained the dismissal of several provincial governors.

The reigns of the next two Qājār monarchs, Muḥammad Shāh (1250/1834–1264/1848) and Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh (1264/1848–1313/1896) saw a persistence and deepening of the opposition between ʿulamā and state. The first forfeited all hope of peaceable relations with the ʿulamā through his patronage of the Ṣūfīs, a group bitterly hated by the majority of the ʿulamā; while the reign of the second witnessed the beginnings of that process of governmental reform, foreign encroachment and westernization which was to threaten the whole traditional context of ʿulamā thought and activity with destruction. It is true that there always existed a certain group of ʿulamā associated with the state, headed by the Imām Jumʿa of Tehran, but of greater importance were those who shunned it as illegitimate and its property as unclean. In the early 1860s there took place a development of great portent when a single mujtahid, Shaikh Murtaẓā Anṣārī (d. 1281/1865), author of the important work on fiqh, *Farāʾid al-Uṣūl*, achieved the position of sole marjaʿ-i taqlīd of the whole Shīʿī community and thereby won immense theoretical power.[27] The function of mujtahid asserted by Bihbahānī and thus raised to its highest potential degree by Anṣārī received its clearest political application when in 1309/1891 Mīrzā Ḥasan Shīrāzī, next sole marjaʿ-i taqlīd after Anṣārī, forbade the use of tobacco after the establishment of a British-owned tobacco monopoly and succeeded in forcing its cancellation.[28] It is against this background of growing ʿulamā power and assertiveness that the participation of the ʿulamā in the Constitutional Revolution should be considered.

The Qājār period was not only one of great political importance for the

[27] See Algar, *op. cit.*, pp. 162–4. [28] *Ibid.*, pp. 210–12.

ʿulamā, but one in which their participation in the daily affairs of society was marked, the literature flowing from their pens proliferated, and their institutions of learning flourished. The ʿulamā operated a judicial system which in many areas competed with that of the state, and their courts were often preferred to the secular jurisdiction as swifter in operation and more just in decision. Their seals were affixed to vital documents of everyday life such as marriage contracts and deeds of possession, and the activity of the bazaar was quite dependent on their services. The residences of the ʿulamā and the mosques over which they presided often provided refuge for those in flight from the jurisdiction of the state, and they would practically assume the administration of provincial cities at times of instability, particularly in the interval between reigns. Cities in which their rôle was especially important were Iṣfahān, where a succession of determined ʿulamā culminating in the notorious Āqā Najafī disputed rule of the city with the governors appointed from Tehran; Tabrīz, which lived under the sway of powerful mujtahids such as Mīrzā Āqā Javād, whose religious authority was solidly reinforced by vast wealth; and Mashhad, where the *auqāf* attached to the shrine of Imām Riżā supported a large number of ʿulamā and their students. In all three of these cities, as well as Tehran, Qum and Shīrāz, important madrasas existed. The ʿatabāt continued, however, to hold a significant place throughout the Qājār period; it was there that decisive developments were initiated, and most figures of importance either resided permanently or studied before returning to Iran. When the ʿulamā passed over to open opposition to the monarchical régime, the location of their chief directive focus in the ʿatabāt, outside Iran, was of great convenience. The study of the religious sciences at all these centres was much facilitated by the lithographing of the abundant fiqh literature of the period, as well as earlier classics of Shiʿism, on the presses both of Iran and India.

It may be thought that this extensive role of the ʿulamā in 19th-century Iran would not have been possible without the triumph of the Uṣūlīs over the Akhbārīs. Devoted to a doctrinal purism, a narrowly literal form of devotion to the Imams, the Akhbārīs were bound to be defeated by a school that offered a living form of direction to the community. It is no coincidence that the period of Akhbārī dominance came when the identity of Iran as a unified Shīʿī state was cast into question. The reaffirmation of that identity was due at least as much to the Uṣūlīs as to the Qājār dynasty.

Almost at the same time that the contest between the Uṣūlīs and the Akhbārīs was settled in favour of the former, a new branch of Shiʿism, the Shaikhī school,

arose, contributing a further element of variety to Iranian Shiʿism and another instance of its internal differentiation. The distinctive teachings that set the Shaikhīs apart from the main body of the Shīʿī community were also concerned in essence with the implications of the occultation of the Imam, but were directed more to the spiritual and cosmological than the legal dimensions of the problem. Akhbārīs and Uṣūlīs were agreed that the Imam continues to exercise a guiding and directive function even while in occultation, but evinced little interest in the precise mode whereby his function is exercised, concentrating instead on the juridical problems resulting from his physical absence. The Shaikhīs, by contrast, devoted intense speculation to the continuing reality of the Imam's spiritual presence, seeking thereby, it has been suggested, a restoration of the esoteric dimension of Shiʿism that had suffered by the Safavid establishment of the faith and the consequent loss of the traditional minority status.[29] Hence the doctrine of the *rukn-i rābiʿ*: the "fourth pillar" of religion that served as a species of intermediary with the Occulted Imam;[30] and the concentration on Hūrqalyā, the intermediate realm between the subtle and the manifest, where the Imam dwells in occultation, and where resurrection shall take place.[31]

The school originates with Shaikh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī, the shaikh *par excellence* in the view of his followers; hence the designation of the school. He spent the early part of his life in Baḥrain, and from his youth onward began to experience a series of compelling visions of the Twelve Imams. He claimed, for example, that Ḥasan ibn ʿAlī had taught him a special form of supplicatory prayer, and that he received authorization to teach religion from the Imams themselves, thus freeing him from the necessity of studying under living masters. He did, however, frequent the ʿatabāt and associate with the most important contemporary scholars there. In 1221/1806, he came to Iran, and spent a number of years between Mashhad, Yazd, Tehran and Kirmānshāh. In all of these places he was enthusiastically received, not only by many of the ʿulamā, but also by provincial governors and Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh himself. This popularity was unable to protect him from the bitter opposition of some of the ʿulamā which resulted in the formal declaration of him to be a *kāfir* by the ʿulamā of Qazvīn. Envy may have played a rôle in the excitement of hostility against Shaikh Aḥmad, but the doctrinal grounds appeared clear enough: the apparent denial of the bodily nature both of the Prophet's ascension (*miʿrāj*) and of the resurrection, by

[29] Corbin, *op. cit.*, p. 206. [30] *Ibid.*, pp. 274–86. [31] *Ibid.*, pp. 287–91.

asserting that the locus for both of these is the realm of Hūrqalyā. After the incident in Qazvīn, Shaikh Aḥmad left Iran, first for the ʿatabāt, and then, still pursued by enmity, for the Ḥijāz. He died in Jidda in 1241/1826.[32]

It is sometimes doubted that he wished to found a new school, but his appointment of a successor (*nāʾib al-manāb*) made it inevitable that a group of followers should crystallize in defence of the doctrines he had expounded. The successor was Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī, who had once been told by his master, "no one understands me but you". He, too, claimed to see the Imams in a series of visions of increasing intensity, and it was in the course of one such vision that Fāṭima, the Prophet's daughter, appeared to him and instructed him to seek out Shaikh Aḥmad, then resident in Yazd. He followed him to Iraq after the incident in Qazvīn, and settled in Karbalā where he spent the rest of his life. His numerous and complex writings were devoted chiefly to the defence and further elaboration of Shaikh Aḥmad's doctrines, especially the denial of the corporeal ascension of the Prophet and the description of the Imams as the efficient cause (*ʿillat-i ghāʾī*) of Creation.[33] Several claimants to the leadership of the Shaikhī school arose after his death in 1259/1843, but the claims of Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kirmānī, a member of the Qājār family, found wide acceptance. Thereafter the direction of the Shaikhīs remained among the descendants of Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān (d. 1288/1870). He was succeeded first by his son, Ḥājj Muḥammad Khān Kirmānī (d. 1324/1906); then by his younger son, Ḥājj Zain al-ʿĀbidīn Khān Kirmānī (d. 1361/1942); and finally by his grandson, Abuʾl-Qāsim Khān Ibrāhīmī (d. 1389/1969), known as Sarkār Āqā. Not surprisingly, Kirmān became one of the two chief centres of Shaikhism, the other being Tabrīz, and the controversy that had first erupted in Qazvīn in the lifetime of Shaikh Aḥmad continued to inspire sporadic but violent clashes in both cities down to the early years of the 20th century. Shaikhīs were constantly excluded from the bathhouses of Tabrīz as heretics and therefore unclean;[34] and in Kirmān in 1905, a minor war between Uṣūlīs and Shaikhīs erupted over the control of *auqāf*.[35]

In common with other groups that flourished in the 19th century, the Shaikhīs produced a vast literature, much of which still remains in manuscript.[36] Shaikh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī alone is credited with 132 works, all in Arabic, the most

[32] *Ibid.*, pp. 216–28. On the life of Shaikh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī, see also the work written by his son, ʿAbd-Allāh al-Aḥsāʾī, *Sharḥ-i Ḥālāt-i Shaikh Aḥmad-i Aḥsāʾī.* [33] Corbin, *op. cit.*, pp. 232–6.

[34] A.L.-M. Nicolas, "Le Cheikhisme," p. 234.

[35] Gianroberto Scarcia, "La 'guerra' tra Šeiḫī e Bālāsarī: Kerman 1905".

[36] A guide to Shaikhī literature is provided by Shaikh Abuʾl-Qāsim Kirmānī in *Fihrist-i Kutub-i Marḥūm Shaikh Aḥmad-i Aḥsāʾī.*

important of which are *Sharḥ al-Ziyāra al-Jāmiʿa*, *al-Fawāʾid* and *Jawāmiʿ al-Kalim*. Kāẓim Rashtī and Muḥammad Karīm Khān Kirmānī were similarly prolific; their major works were *Dalīl al-Mutaḥayyirīn* and *Irshād al-ʿAwāmm* respectively. Without a detailed examination of this literature, it is difficult to attempt a concise definition of the school. Without necessarily suggesting an incoherent eclecticism, we may point out first the wide variety of reminiscences awakened by Shaikhī doctrine. The concept of Hūrqalyā, for example, is clearly derived from Suhravardī Maqtūl and the Ishrāqī school, for whom it also constituted an intermediary realm, mirroring in itself the forms of the hereafter and the suprasensory realm which are reflected in turn on the earthly plane.[37] Other formulations and teachings suggest a late recrudescence of Ismaʿilism: the concept of an unseen spiritual hierarchy headed by a *bāb aʿẓam* ("supreme gate"); the interpretation of the six days of creation as indicating the six realms that constitute the macrocosm; and the very term *rukn-i rābiʿ* itself, which first occurs in a text written by Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī in his Ismāʿīlī period.[38]

Secondly, there was a clear emphasis on a special mode of closeness to the Imams, and especially the Twelfth Imam, and a fearless claim to have been inspired and infallibly instructed by them. We have seen that Shaikh Aḥmad and Kāẓim Rashtī both enjoyed frequent communication with the Imams through visions and dreams, and Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān also felt himself to be constantly guided by the Imams.[39] There was no need to examine akhbār with the methods of exoteric science; intuition correctly guided by inspiration from the Imams could immediately distinguish the authentic from the false. The Shaikhī leaders also claimed the ability to interpret the teachings with an infallible authority derived from the same source, and if there was an appearance of novelty to any of the Shaikhī doctrines, it was only because the Imams had authorized removal of the veil of *taqīya* from what it had previously concealed.[40] It is true that the Shaikhīs never claimed for their leaders any of the ranks in the hidden spiritual hierarchy, and that neither Shaikh Aḥmad nor Kāẓim Rashtī explicitly identified himself with the rukn-i rābiʿ. But it is clear that the Shaikhī leaders claimed a certain mode of spiritual proximity to the Imams and an authority deriving from them not totally dissimilar to the concept of the *bāb*, the gate of communication between the Occulted Imam and his faithful community.

It would be wrong, however, to see in Shaikhism simply the seedbed of Babism. Rather we would characterize it as a school of esoteric intent that

[37] Henry Corbin's anthology, *Terre Céleste et Corps de Resurrection*, makes clear the continuous transmission of these notions from pre-Islamic Iran.

[38] Corbin, *En Islam Iranien* IV, pp. 262, 286, 293ff. [39] *Ibid.*, p. 239. [40] *Ibid.*, p. 285.

sought, on the eve of the modern age, to develop a vast and complex metaphysic and cosmology centred obsessively on the traditional Shīʿī theme of the Imamate, and in so doing draw on a wide variety of schools that had flourished in the Iranian spiritual world. It was in fact the last great school of esoteric speculation to be provided by Islamic Iran, a phenomenon totally different from Usulism, but like it a proof of the vitality of Shiʿism in the early 19th century.

The late 18th century also witnessed the recrudescence of another type of Shīʿī esoterism, *ṭarīqat* ("way" or "path") Sufism approximately of the Sunnī kind, a form of the religious life abhorrent to Akhbārīs, Uṣūlīs and Shaikhīs alike. Sufism bore a certain resemblance to Shiʿism in its concern with the esoteric and in its acknowledgement of the spiritual pre-eminence of ʿAlī among the Companions of the Prophet, but the two streams had always been opposed to each other in their historical expression. There was the simple fact that the great majority of Ṣūfī masters were of Sunnī affiliation, and, moreover, when the *shaikh-murīd* relationship of the ṭarīqats became formalized, the preceptorial function exercised by the *shaikh* appeared to the Shīʿa to contradict the monopoly of true spiritual guidance held by the Imam.

In the post-Mongol period, however, certain Ṣūfī orders of Shīʿī affiliation arose, generally through the gradual transformation of an originally Sunnī order. Such was the case with the Safavids, who accomplished a further transformation into a dynasty and state. Other examples are furnished by the Ẕahabiyya, an offshoot of the Kubraviyya, an order which in its main line maintained a Sunnī identity; and the Niʿmat-Allāhī ṭarīqat, which owes its name to the Sunnī master, Shāh Niʿmat-Allāh Valī Kirmānī (d. 834/1431). The absorption of the Shīʿī elements by these and other groups may be thought to have resulted from the ubiquitousness of the ṭarīqat phenomenon in the post-Mongol period, both as a form of social organization and as a refuge for minority persuasions, not only Shīʿīs but also Ismāʿīlīs.

Little is known about the fate either of the Ẕahabiyya or the Niʿmat-Allāhiyya in the Safavid period. The Ẕahabiyya claim to have maintained an unbroken initiatic chain throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, but nothing is known about the identity of the links in the chain.[41] The leaders of the Niʿmat-Allāhiyya appear to have enjoyed close and friendly relations both with Shāh Ismāʿīl and his successor, Ṭahmāsp, but fell into disfavour in the time of Shāh ʿAbbās

[41] Richard Gramlich, *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* XXXVI.1 (Wiesbaden, 1965), pp. 16–17.

because of alleged oppositional activities. Thereafter there is barely a trace of them in Iran until the end of the Safavid period.[42]

In the 18th century both orders re-emerged, more importantly the Niᶜmat-Allāhiyya. Many Niᶜmat-Allāhīs had fled in Safavid times to the Deccan, and now the traffic was reversed. Riżā ᶜAlī Shāh Dakkanī, the head of the order, dispatched Shāh Ṭāhir Dakkanī and Maᶜṣūm ᶜAlī Shāh Dakkanī to Iran in the late 18th century to revive the order in its homeland. They met with much success, attaining a large following very swiftly, but also with a determined and intransigent hostility on the part of the ᶜulamā which went as far as murderous persecution. Muḥammad ᶜAlī Bihbahānī not only wrote two treatises in bitter condemnation of the Ṣūfīs, *Risāla-yi Khairātiyya* and *Qaṭᶜ al-Maqāl fī Radd Ahl al-Ḍalāl*, but also directed against them the same vigorous enmity that his father had nurtured for the Akhbārīs; it was on his orders that Maᶜṣūm ᶜAlī Shāh was killed in Kirmānshāh in 1212/1797. Numerous other Niᶜmat-Allāhīs were also put to death by the ᶜulamā or at their instigation, in Shīrāz, Kirmān and elsewhere.[43] In this campaign of persecution, the ᶜulamā were able to enlist the support of royal authority: first Karīm Khān Zand, who expelled from Shīrāz Nūr ᶜAlī Shāh, Maᶜṣūm ᶜAlī Shāh's successor as head of the order in Iran, and then Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh Qājār, who surrendered two of Nūr ᶜAlī Shāh's followers to the wrath of Bihbahānī.[44] Matters changed with the accession of Muḥammad Shāh, who under the influence of his minister, Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī, began instead to patronize and protect the Ṣūfīs, particularly members of the Niᶜmat-Allāhī order, and himself to cultivate Ṣūfī affiliations.[45] Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh appears to have had no Ṣūfī proclivities, but ᶜulamā hostility to Sufism in his reign was restricted to debate and written controversy; open persecution had definitively ceased.

By the middle of the 19th century, the Niᶜmat-Allāhī order was then firmly established. Already Nūr ᶜAlī Shāh had acquired a following of thousands in the area of Kirmān, and his followers were able to make it one of the chief centres of the order, adding a further element of diversity to the religious life of the city. Other Niᶜmat-Allāhī centres grew up in Shīrāz, Iṣfahān, Hamadān and Tehran. The expansion and strengthening of the order went together with a division into several branches. Muḥammad Jaᶜfar Kabūdar Āhangī Majẕūb ᶜAlī Shāh (d. 1239/1823) was the last leader to exercise undisputed control over the whole order. Three separate claimants to the leadership arose after his death, the most

[42] Aubin, p. 242. [43] Gramlich, *op. cit.*, pp. 31–40. [44] Algar, *op. cit.*, p. 63.
[45] *Ibid.*, pp. 105–8.

successful being Zain al-ʿĀbidīn Shīrvānī (d. 1253/1837), author of a number of important works on the history of the order and on Iranian Sufism in general. When Shīrvānī's successor, Zain al-ʿĀbidīn Raḥmat ʿAlī Shāh, died in 1278/1861, a further trifurcation took place, and the main body of the Niʿmat-Allāhīs became divided into the lines of Ẕūʾl-Riyāsatain Munavvar ʿAlī Shāh (d. 1301/1884), Ṣafī ʿAlī Shāh (d. 1316/1899) and Saʿādat ʿAlī Shāh (d. 1293/1876), this last being later known as the Gunābādī line. Each line had its own characteristics, the line of Ẕūʾl-Riyāsatain holding more strictly to traditional Niʿmat-Allāhī belief and practice. The line of Ṣafī ʿAlī Shāh had aristocratic affiliations; his successor, Ṣafā ʿAlī Shāh Ẓahīr al-Daula (d. 1342/1924) was minister of court. In 1317/1899, the practice of individual leadership of this branch of the order was abandoned in favour of a ten-man directorate, possibly under the influence of masonic models. The order itself was renamed Anjuman-i Ukhuvvat, The Society of Brotherhood. As for the Gunābādī line, this developed into the most powerful and well-endowed of all branches of the Niʿmat-Allāhiyya, under the direction of Mullā Muḥammad Sulṭān ʿAlī Shāh, a forceful and controversial figure who was murdered in 1909.[46]

This diversification of the Niʿmat-Allāhī order by no means signified a weakening of Sufism; it was rather an instance of secondary differentiation within post-Safavid Shiʿism. The Niʿmat-Allāhīs not only established a widespread following but also produced a prolific literature in both prose and verse, much of it banal and unoriginal, but some of it of genuine value. Of particular interest in these writings are the responses formulated by the Niʿmat-Allāhīs to the attacks of the ʿulamā on the permissibility of Sufism as a path to be followed by the Shīʿa. We may refer, for example, to Zain al-ʿĀbidīn's *Kashf al-Maʿārif*. The son of an Uṣulī mujtahid, he nevertheless attacks the ʿulamā as a class, saying that they cannot rightfully claim the rank of heirs to the prophets to which a celebrated *ḥadīth* apparently entitles them, because of the dissensions existing among them, and their lack of a "sacred faculty" (*quvva-yi qudsiyya*) that would permit them to grasp the esoteric as well as the exoteric dimension of religion.[47] Only those ʿulamā can function as heirs of the prophets who join the practice of Sufism to their study of fiqh: as examples he lists ʿAbd al-Ṣamad Hamadānī, Muḥammad Jaʿfar Hamadānī and Maulānā Ibrāhīm Khūʾī, all of whom joined the Niʿmat-Allāhī order after first being mujtahids.[48] There exists, it is true, a saying of the Imām Riżā that "whoever hears the Ṣūfīs mentioned in his presence and does not condemn them with his tongue or in his heart is not one of us; and

[46] Concerning all of these developments, see Gramlich, *op. cit.*, pp. 50–66.
[47] *Kashf al-Maʿārif* (Tehran, 1350/1971), pp. 5–6. [48] *Ibid.*, pp. 17–18.

whoever does so condemn them is like one who is fighting against the unbelievers in the presence of the Messenger of God". The saying should be understood, however, as referring exclusively to false Ṣūfīs who "cloud the sun of the Imamate", *i.e.*, Sunnī Ṣūfīs.[49] "True Sufism", it was asserted by Maᶜṣūm ᶜAlī Shāh, son of Shīrvānī's successor, "is true Shiᶜism; the path of the Immaculate Imams is outwardly the *sharīᶜat* of the Imāmī Shīᶜa, and inwardly the divine truths of Sufism."[50]

As for the objection that the pretensions of the leader of the Ṣūfī order clashed with the prerogatives of the Imams, and that his very title of *quṭb* ("pole") was usurped from them, Niᶜmat-Allāhīs replied that a distinction should be made between the supreme guidance exercised by the Imam and the partial guidance exercised by the *quṭb*. The Imam was termed by them a "solar pole", and the Ṣūfī shaikh a "lunar pole", deriving his authority and efficacy from the Imam. Expressed differently, the Imam had "solar authority" (*vilāyat-i shamsiyya*) and the *quṭb* "lunar authority" (*vilāyat-i qamariyya*). The true preceptor (*pīr-i ḥaqīqat*) is indeed the Imam, but since he is in occultation his guiding functions devolve practically upon the quṭb, just as his juridical functions devolve practically upon the mujtahid: in both instances final authority is the Imam's alone.[51]

Despite their counterattacks upon the ᶜulamā, and their attempts to reconcile the function of the quṭb with the doctrine of the Imamate, the Ṣūfīs remained permanently suspected of irreligion and heresy. Zain al-ᶜĀbidīn Shīrvānī remarked with some bitterness that whoever in Iran deals with such matters as ritual purification after menstrual discharge and the legal stratagems that permit the taking of interest counts as the most pious scholar of age; but whoever so much as mentions the purification of the soul and the practice of asceticism is unhesitatingly dismissed as a heretic.[52] His complaint was justified insofar as the overwhelming emphasis of Iranian Shiᶜism in the 19th century was on law and the external dimension of religion. Neither the speculations of the Shaikhīs nor the protests of the Niᶜmat-Allāhīs could alter this, the most signal consequence of the triumph of Usulism. The Ṣūfīs were destined to remain a minority, however well-entrenched, sought out by those who found attractive the spiritual possibilities and the intimate welcoming circle that the ṭarīqat offered.

Less important than the Niᶜmat-Allāhīs but also deserving of mention are two other Ṣūfī groups, the Ẕahabiyya and the Khāksār. The Ẕahabiyya were

[49] *Ibid.*, p. 19. [50] Maᶜṣūm ᶜAlī Shāh, *Ṭarāʾiq al-Ḥaqāʾiq* I, p. 104.
[51] Richard Gramlich, "Pol und Scheich im heutigen Derwischtum der Schia", p. 175.
[52] Zain al-ᶜĀbidīn Shirvānī, *Bustān al-Siyāḥa*, pp. 117–18.

first concentrated in Shīrāz, where their leader held by hereditary right the post of administrator at the shrine of Shāh Chirāgh. They later expanded into Āẕarbāījān, and divided into two groups toward the end of the 19th century. As for the Khāksār, they consisted originally of unorganized dervishes of traditional antinomian, *qalandar* type, who gradually coalesced into an order along more disciplined lines.[53]

We have stressed so far doctrinal developments and debates among the ʿulamā and their competitors in religious leadership, the Ṣūfī orders. Popular religiosity should not remain unmentioned, for the affective loyalty of the masses to Shiʿism was secured primarily by a variety of emotionally laden devotional practices that expressed the genius of Shiʿism as a religion of conflict and suffering. An important place was held in popular religious life by visits to the shrines of the Imams and their relatives, whether the great centres of pilgrimage at the ʿatabāt, Mashhad and Qum, or the more modest *imāmzāda*s to be found in every corner of the country. Such pilgrimages afforded the opportunity of intimate discourse with the sacred figure buried at the shrine, of seeking his intercession and favour, and of offering a vow and making atonement. It was possible, too, to participate vicariously in the imagined struggles of ʿAlī against ʿUmar, the perennial butt of Shīʿī execration, by celebrating annually the murder of ʿUmar in the festival of *ʿumarkushān* or making pilgrimage to the tomb of his assassin near Kāshān.

Most important among these props of popular piety was the commemoration of the martyrdom of Imām Ḥusain at Karbalā through the recitation of verse and dramatic performance, a form of sentimental religiosity that flourished throughout the Qājār period. Poetry celebrating the heroic death of Ḥusain had long existed, both in Persian and Arabic, and had been much fostered by the Safavids as one means for the inculcation of Shīʿī sentiment. The 19th century saw a continuing enrichment of this genre. Particularly celebrated were the poems on the tragedy at Karbalā composed by Yaghmā Jandaqī and Qāʾānī Shīrāzī, otherwise known chiefly for their ribald and satirical poetry.[54] A more extensive work on the same subject that enjoyed continuing popularity throughout the Qājār period was the *Rauẓat al-Shuhadā* of Ḥusain ibn ʿAlī Kāshifī (d. 910/1504), which was ceremonially recited by professional readers not only during Muḥarram but on other suitable occasions during the year. These recitations,

[53] Gramlich, *Die schiitischen Derwischorden Persiens*, pp. 18–26.

[54] See Yaghmā Jandaqī, *Kulliyāt*, pp. 289–301; and Ḥakīm Qāʾānī Shīrāzī, *Dīvān*, pp. 947–57.

known as *rauẓakhwānī*, counted as acts of charity as well as pious remembrance. They were frequently held in the homes of grandees or prosperous merchants, and those invited received bodily as well as spiritual nourishment.

The full significance of the tragedy at Karbalā for the Shīʿī soul was manifested in the *taʿẓiya*, the so-called passion play of Iran (see also Chapter 20). Through witnessing or participating in the dramatic re-enactment of the martyrdom of Ḥusain, the believer experienced the defeat of the Imam in direct and vivid fashion, not as a mere historical memory, but as a living piece of metahistory. In the person of Ḥusain the aspiration for justice was seen to have confronted the tyranny of an impious régime, and when the spectators at the taʿziya wept in memory of his martyrdom, they were lamenting too the recurrent temporal defeat of the same aspiration. Ḥusain's struggle against the Umayyads was transfigured into an archetype of the conflict between justice and tyranny, endowing the remembrance and re-enactment of it with a particular intensity of devotion. Cathartic and atoning tears were shed, and vicariously the faithful joined the company of the martyrs.

The historical origins of the taʿziya are unclear, although it is probable that it first developed in Safavid times. The earliest reference to dramatic performances in commemoration of Karbalā appear to date from the late 18th century.[55] The Qājār era, and particularly the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, was indisputably the period of the greatest flourishing of the taʿziya. It enjoyed popularity in all classes of society, and was performed in settings that ranged from the simplest open-air stage to the royal theatre (*takya-yi daulat*) of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh that could accommodate up to 20,000 people. Frequently the taʿziya was staged by *anjuman*s that fashioned, accumulated and maintained the necessary props and assigned each member a permanent rôle in the performance. These fraternities were affiliated with traditional chivalrous and artisan organizations such as the *lūṭī*s or *javānmardān*; indeed they were sometimes identical with them. There subsequently arose, however, a class of professional performers that was patronized by local princes and the court in Tehran. Royal patronage led inevitably to a partial secularization of the taʿziya: ambassadors were invited to watch the proceedings at the royal theatre, and one well-travelled member of the court remarked that the performances there were more laughable than the comedies of Europe.[56] At a popular level also, the taʿziya gradually gave rise to a secular drama that drew its themes from the classics of Persian romance. Despite

[55] Ehsan Yarshater, "Development of Persian Drama in the Context of Cultural Confrontation", p. 27. [56] Algar, *op. cit.*, p. 159.

these developments, the taᶜziya has remained a powerful means for both nurturing and expressing the affective loyalty of the Iranian masses to Shīᶜī Islam.[57]

The 19th century was, then, a period in which Iran witnessed a multiple deployment of Shiᶜism in its varying forms, exoteric and esoteric, legalistic and Ṣūfī, learned and popular, completing the process of identification between Iran and Shiᶜism that had been initiated by the Safavids and lain dormant through most of the 18th century. The Qājār period also gave final proof, on the verge of the modern age, of Iran's lasting fecundity in eclectic and heterodox doctrine, with the rise of Babism and its twin successors, Azalism and Bahaᵓism.

In Jumādā I 1260/May 1844, Sayyid ᶜAlī Muḥammad, a former student of the Shaikhī leader Kāẓim Rashtī, declared himself in Shīrāz to be the *Bāb*, the "Gate" or intermediary between the Occulted Imam and his faithful community. Soon, however, the nature of his claims changed, and it was suggested that he was the Imam himself, returned to the plane of manifestation. Thus one of his earlier followers, Mullā ᶜAlī Akbar Ardistānī, appended to the call to prayer he sounded from the mosque of Āqā Qāsim in Shīrāz: "I bear witness that ᶜAlī Muḥammad is the remnant of Allāh [*baqiyatuᵓllāh*]", this being an epithet traditionally bestowed on the Occulted Imam.[58] Later the Bāb ascended to still higher status, proclaiming himself the recipient of a new scriptural revelation and a new divine law.

These claims met with immediate opposition on the part of the ᶜulamā, and several confrontations took place between them and the Bāb. After the first such debate, the Bāb was restricted to his house, before being removed to somewhat lenient imprisonment in Iṣfahān. In 1263/1847, he was banished to Āẕarbāījān, being held first in Mākū and then in the castle of Chihriq near Lake Urmīya, under far more rigorous conditions. While the Bāb was being transferred from one place of confinement to another, his followers were engaged in rebellion in various parts of the country under the direction of a number of remarkable leaders: Mullā Ḥusain Bushravaih, Mullā Muḥammad ᶜAlī and the celebrated poetess Qurrat al-ᶜAin in Māzandarān; Mullā Muḥammad Zanjānī in Zanjān; and Sayyid Yaḥyā Dārābī in Nīrīz. In the hope of definitively quelling all such insurrectionary activity, Mīrzā Taqī Khān Amīr Kabīr, the great reforming minister, ordered the Bāb to be executed in Tabrīz in 1266/1850, more for reasons of state than of orthodox piety.[59]

[57] For a good survey of the whole subject of the *taᶜziya*, see Enrico Cerulli, "Le théâtre persan".
[58] Mīrzā Ḥusain Hamadānī, *Tārīkh-i Jadīd*, p. 200.
[59] These events are well summarized in W.M. Miller, *The Bahāᵓí Faith*, pp. 13–47.

Enthusiasm for the cause of the Bāb did not wane with his death, and in 1268/1852, three Bābīs attempted to assassinate Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh in order to avenge their dead master. A widespread persecution of Bābīs ensued, including Mīrzā Yaḥyā Nūrī and his half-brother, Mīrzā Ḥusain Nūrī, who were to preside over the bifurcation of Babism in its next stage of development. Various explanations have been offered for the positive, indeed dedicated, response that many in Iran accorded to the cause of the Bāb. It has been suggested that his teachings in some way foreshadowed the modernization that was later to overtake Iran. It is true that he wished to abrogate the Islamic *sharīʿat*, forbade polygamous marriages and abolished all notion of ritual purity. But it is difficult to see in these measures even a proto-modernizing spirit, considering the context in which they were enounced, the *Bayān*, a book that also instructed all Bābīs to carry a talisman of 2001 squares[60] and recommended that no conversation between unmarried men and women should exceed twenty-eight words.[61] In any event, it is unlikely that the early Bābī enthusiasts would have had access to the Bāb's writings, any more than they did to the man himself; it has been justly remarked that their devotion was more to leaders than to books and precepts.[62] We would suggest rather that a pre-existing potential for revolt was activated by the invocation of the powerful theme of the messianic return of the Occulted Imam, and that Babism was the very opposite of a modernizing phenomenon. There are to be found in Babism a large number of Ismāʿīlī echoes and reminiscences, in its terminology, cosmology and numerology; it can in fact be regarded from one point of view as the last surfacing of the perennial Ismāʿīlī ferment in Iran.[63]

An immediate precedent for Babism is provided by the Shaikhī school, and Shaikh Aḥmad Aḥsāʾī and Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī have been claimed by the Bābīs as the spiritual ancestors of the Bāb. To regard the Shaikhīs simply as forerunners of Babism would no doubt be erroneous, and Ḥājj Muḥammad Karīm Khān, successor to Sayyid Kāẓim Rashtī, was in fact bitterly opposed to Babism.[64] But insofar as the Shaikhīs had not remained content with awaiting the return of the Occulted Imam, and spoken of the rukn-i rābiʿ, an ill-defined species of intermediary between the Imam and his community, they had disturbed the delicate traditional equilibrium between a patient endurance of the Occultation and a desire for its ending. It is surely no coincidence that a large proportion of those ʿulamā who embraced Babism were originally Shaikhīs.[65]

[60] *Le Béyan Persan*, trans. A.L.-M. Nicolas (Paris, 1914), IV, p. 25. [61] *Ibid.*, p. 99.

[62] E.G. Browne, introduction to *Tārīkh-i Jadīd*, p. xxvii.

[63] Gianroberto Scarcia has concisely defined Babism as "a neo-Ismaʿili interpretation of Shaikhi Imamism". See "A proposito", p. 121.

[64] He wrote a work entitled *Sī Faṣl* in refutation of Bābism.

[65] For a list of Shaikhīs who accepted Babism, see ʿAbbās Efandī, *A Traveller's Narrative* II, p. 6.

The Bāb had appointed as his successor one of the brothers that went into exile in 1268/1852, Mīrzā Yaḥyā Nūrī, who was commonly known by the title of Ṣubḥ-i Azal, "The Morning of Eternity".[66] He had also written, however, of one who was to come after him with yet another new dispensation, designating him as "he whom God shall manifest."[67] In 1280/1863, Mīrzā Yaḥyā's half-brother, Mīrzā Ḥusain Nūrī, adorned with the title of Bahāʾ-Allāh, "The Splendour of God", first declared himself in a garden near Baghdad to be that promised manifestation, and thus the legitimate successor to the Bāb. A number of the Bābīs accepted him as such, and others, encouraged by his example, advanced similar claims, but attained no notable success. The dispute that then arose between the two brothers reached critical proportions when Bahāʾ-Allāh made a public affirmation of his claim in Edirne in 1283/1866, about three years after the Ottoman government had removed them there from Baghdad.[68] A schism occurred, with the followers of Ṣubḥ-i Azal adhering to the teachings of the Bāb and those of Bahāʾ-Allāh following him in the elaboration of a new religion. It became necessary to separate the two groups physically, and thus Ṣubḥ-i Azal and his disciples were sent to Famagusta, while Bahāʾ-Allāh went with his following to Acre. The former died in 1330/1912, and the latter in 1310/1892.

The majority of the Bābīs that had remained in Iran ultimately rallied to Bahāʾ-Allāh's claims, and the Azalīs sank into obscurity, with the exception of a few figures who, concealing their identity, played a rôle of some importance in the Constitutional Revolution.[69] It may be thought that Bahaʾism, maintaining the original doctrinal dynamism of the movement and refusing to settle into a stable, fixed form, was bound to predominate over Azalism, which sought to remain rigidly faithful to the teachings of the Bāb. Bahaʾism also made claims to universality, espousing such dominant concerns of modern Europe as the congruence of religion and science, universal peace, female emancipation and the unity of religions. Indeed, the whole subsequent development of Bahaʾism, with its further disputes over succession and revisions of doctrine, belongs more to the history of the reception of Oriental sages by the post-Christian West than to the millennial traditions of Islamic Iran. It is true that, despite continued hostility, the Bahāʾīs have maintained their existence in Iran, drawing a number of converts especially from the Jewish and Zoroastrian communities. But the challenge presented by them and their Bābī predecessors to the hegemony of

[66] Miller, pp. 73–5. [67] *Ibid.*, p. 54. [68] *Ibid.*, p. 98.
[69] Keddie, "Religion and Irreligion", p. 291.

Shīʿī Islam in Iran in the 19th century was never profound, and their story is incidental to the main themes in the religious history of the period.

In conclusion, developments affecting the religious minorities in Iran may be briefly reviewed.

The Ismāʿīlī Nizārī Imams, after a long period of almost complete obscurity, emerge in the 18th century to renewed participation in Iranian history. In 1170/1756, we find Imām Abuʾl-Ḥasan Shāh as governor of Kirmān for the Zands, a post he held until his death in 1206/1791. His son and successor as Imam, Shāh Khalīl-Allāh, enjoyed good relations with Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, but was killed in Yazd in 1232/1817. A mullā responsible for the disturbances was brought to Tehran and bastinadoed, and Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh sought to compensate the new Imam, Ḥasan ʿAlī Shāh Maḥallatī, known as Āghā Khān, for the death of his father by giving him one of his daughters in marriage and appointing him governor of Kirmān. Āghā Khān rebelled against the central authority, and, defeated by government forces, was obliged in 1258/1842 to withdraw into Afghanistan. Thence he proceeded into India, to inaugurate the long association between the Ismāʿīlī Nizārī Imamate and the British Raj. It is probable, indeed, that his rebellion took place at British instigation, or at least that it enjoyed British support, as a diversionary move aiding British efforts for the final detachment of Herat from Iran. There were other motives also at work , especially rivalry for the leadership of the Niʿmat-Allāhī tarīqat: Āghā Khān's support of Zain al-ʿĀbidīn Shīrvānī earned him the hostility of Mīrzā Āghāsī, Muḥammad Shāh's minister. Although the revolt marked the final exit of the Ismāʿīlī Imamate from Iran, almost six centuries after the fall of Alamūt, small Ismāʿīlī communities persisted in the areas of Maḥallāt in central Iran, Qāʾin in the east and Shahr-i Bābak in the southeast.[70]

Of greater significance were the Sunnī minorities inhabiting the fringes of Iran. Developments of some importance, all connected with the Naqshbandī tarīqat, affected the Ḥanafī minority of Khurāsān in the east and the Kurds in the northwest. The resistance of Herat to Iranian rule resulted not only from British encouragement but also from the desire of the majority Sunnī element in the city to be rid of Shīʿī dominance. The wars over Herat can in fact be regarded as a minor resumption of the Sunnī–Shīʿī confrontation on the eastern border of Iran that had pitched the Safavids and Uzbeks against each other. An important

[70] Algar, "The Revolt of Āghā Khān Maḥallātī", p. 55–81.

part in the organization of Herātī resistance to the Iranians was played by a Naqshbandī dervish from Bukhārā, Ṣūfī Islām. Although he died in battle in 1222/1807, he left behind him a distinctive branch of the ṭarīqat which, based at Karrukh in Afghanistan, extended a powerful influence across the border among the Ḥanafīs of Khurāsān.[71] Somewhat later, a certain Khwāja Muḥammad Yūsuf Jāmī established a centre of another branch of the Naqshbandī ṭarīqat, the Mujaddidī, at Turbat-i Jām near the Afghan border. The Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī shaikhs of Turbat-i Jām were a source of strength for the beleaguered Ḥanafīs of Khurāsān in their resistance to Shīʿī governors and ʿulamā intent on imposing Shiʿism upon them, and attracted devotees from Turkistan, Afghanistan and India as well as Khurāsān.

The first quarter of the 19th century witnessed the establishment of an important derivative of the Naqshbandī-Mujaddidī order in the western Islamic world, the Khālidiyya. It was founded by a Kurd from Sulaimāniyya, Maulānā Khālid (d. 1243/1827), and soon took root among the Kurds of Iran. The Khālidiyya is militantly anti-Shīʿī, and Maulānā Khālid himself, when travelling through Iran to India, engaged in bitter polemics with the Shīʿī ʿulamā.[72] Leadership of the order in Iranian Kurdistān became intertwined with tribal authority, and inspired a number of prolonged Kurdish revolts against Iranian rule that are to be regarded equally as opposition to Iranian rule and as acts of anti-Shīʿī hostility.[73]

Among the non-Muslim minorities of Iran, the Christians, both Armenians and Assyrians, were able to attain a new position of prominence in government and commerce during the Qājār period. They acted as intermediaries between Muslim Iran and the Christian West, functioning as interpreters, agents of European commercial enterprises, and even furnishing some of the first Iranian envoys to be posted to Europe. For the Armenians, this was a continuation of the analogous role they had played in the Safavid period. Most prominent among the Iranian Armenians of the Qājār period was Mīrzā Malkum Khān, who made an opportunistic profession of Islam but remained true to the rôle of the Armenian community by acting as an agent of modernization in several important respects.[74]

Missions – Catholic, Anglican and Presbyterian – proliferated in Iran throughout the 19th century, and found their attempts to convert Armenians

[71] See Aṣīl al-Dīn Haravī, *Risāla-yi Maẓārāt-i Harāt*, pp. 154–7.
[72] al-Shaikh Muḥammad Amīn al-Kurdī, *al-Mawāhib al-Sarmadiyya*, p. 261.
[73] Iʿtimād al-Salṭana, *al-Maʾāṣir vaʾl-Āṣār*, pp. 50–1.
[74] See Hamid Algar, *Mīrzā Malkum Khān*.

and Assyrians from one denomination of Christianity to another more profitable than proselytizing activities among the Muslims. Thus a whole series of "native" churches came into being, at the expense of the Nestorian and Gregorian communities.[75]

Jews and Zoroastrians also benefited from an outside interest in their welfare. The Alliance Israélite Universelle constructed schools for the Jews in Tehran, Hamadān and elsewhere, and despite losses to both Bahaʾism and Christianity, the Jewish community of Iran strengthened its position throughout the 19th century.[76] The Zoroastrians received assistance from their more prosperous coreligionists in Bombay, who founded the Persian Zoroastrian Amelioration Fund in 1854 and some thirty years later were able to obtain the suppression of the *jizya* levied on the Zoroastrians.[77]

The 18th and 19th centuries constitute then a period in which Shiʿism underwent a process of internal differentiation that marked its final emancipation from the patronage of the state and its conclusive coalescence with the national spirit of Iran. The challenge mounted by Babism was effectively repulsed, and Shīʿī Islam, in all its manifold forms of expression, passed into the 20th century, thus entering a period of unprecedented peril and unexpected triumph.

[75] Robin E. Waterfield, *Christians in Persia*, pp. 87–176.
[76] Ḥabīb Levi, *Tārīkh-i Yahūd-i Īrān* III, p. 247.
[77] Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, *La Religion de l'Iran Ancien*, p. 380.

CHAPTER 20

RELIGIOUS FORCES IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY IRAN

It would, no doubt, be the result of selective hindsight to regard the first eight decades of the 20th century as the ineluctable prelude to the Islamic Revolution of 1978–9. The cultural and political orientation of Iranian society was placed repeatedly in question as the Pahlavī family sought to transform the monarchy into a modern, authoritarian state, and secularist, leftist and nationalist forces emerged on the political scene. For several decades, moreover, most of the leading ᶜ*ulamā* made no effort to exert a decisive influence outside the relatively narrow confines of the religious institution. Nonetheless, the tenacity of religion as a major force throughout the modern history of Iran is remarkable and unmistakable, and we may legitimately discern in a whole series of Islamic personages, institutions and movements the antecedents that made possible – although by no means inevitable – the great transformations ushered in by the revolution of 1978–9.[1]

The preponderant rôle played by ᶜulamā in the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–11, especially in its earlier phases, is well known. The alliance concluded in November 1905 by two leading *mujtahid*s of Tehran, Sayyid ᶜAbd-Allāh Bihbahānī and Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭabāṭabā'ī, to bring about the overthrow of ᶜAin al-Daula, prime minister of the day, is often considered the starting point of the revolution.[2] The revolution had been preceded, moreover, by almost a century of sporadic conflict between leading ᶜulamā and successive Qājār rulers. Following on the tobacco boycott of 1891–2, ᶜulamā-led protests against loans taken from foreign powers and the consequent alienation of the Iranian economy became increasingly frequent in the opening years of the 20th century.[3] Some ᶜulamā encouraged their followers to boycott foreign goods, citing both

[1] Given our concern with major patterns and trends, some individual scholars deserving of mention will be passed over in silence. Examples are the biographer and bibliographer Āqā Buzurg Ṭihrānī (d. 1970); the traditionist ᶜAllāma Amīnī (d. 1970); and the philosopher and exegete of the Qur'ān, ᶜAllāma Ṭabāṭabā'ī (d. 1982). We are likewise compelled to ignore Ṣūfī masters such as Shams al-ᶜUrafā (d. 1935) and the numerous scholars of ᶜ*irfān* that flourished in 20th-century Iran.

[2] Aḥmad Kasravī, *Tārīkh-i Mashrūṭa-yi Īrān*, p. 49.

[3] See N.R. Keddie, "Iranian Politics 1900–1905: Background to Revolution".

concern for ritual purity and political considerations.[4] The mosques and shrines of the capital and its environs were the principal bastions of the constitutionalists, and their speeches and declarations were suffused with the concepts and emotions of Shīʿī Islam. The first triumphs of the constitutionalists – Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh's agreement to institute an *ʿadālatkhāna* ("House of Justice") in January 1906; his dismissal of ʿAin al-Daula in August 1906; and the convening of the first Majlis soon thereafter – would have been unthinkable without the mass movement led by Bihbahānī, Ṭabāṭabāʾī and their colleagues among the ʿulamā.

It is equally obvious, however, that there was no straightforward derivation of constitutionalism – with all that it implied for the concepts of sovereignty and legislation – from established religious precept. The initial demand of the ʿulamā was for an *ʿadālatkhāna* or *majlis-i maʿdilat* ("Assembly of Justice"), the functions of which were never clearly expressed. As for constitutionalism more strictly conceived (*mashrūṭa*), this was a notion first promulgated in Iran by secular intellectuals with direct or indirect experience of Europe; as Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭabāṭabāʾī put it, "We [the ʿulamā] had no direct experience of constitutionalism. But what we heard from those who had seen countries with constitutional régimes was that constitutionalism conduces to the security and prosperity of a country. So we conceived an enthusiastic interest and made arrangements for establishing a constitution in this country."[5] Matters were clearly not that simple, for Ṭabāṭabāʾī himself was chary of using the word *mashrūṭa*, evidently because it was felt to carry undertones of republicanism and irreligion.[6]

Nonetheless, the confusion or vagueness sometimes attributed to leading ʿulamā in their support of the Constitutional Revolution should not be exaggerated. The two mujtahids of Tehran were joined in their approval of the constitutionalist cause by three of the most prominent religious authorities resident in Najaf: Shaikh ʿAbd-Allāh Māzandarānī (d. 1912), Ākhūnd Muḥammad Kāẓim Khurāsānī (d. 1911), and Ḥājjī Mīrzā Ḥusain Khalīlī Ṭihrānī (d. 1908). Their vigorous activities in favour of the cause continued unhesitatingly throughout the period known as *istibdād-i ṣaghīr* ("the minor autocracy", from June 1908 to July 1909), and the reasons they cited for their stance may be taken as typical for the constitutionalist ʿulamā as a whole.

[4] Āqā Najafī-Qūchānī, *Siyāḥat-i Sharq*, p. 23.

[5] Statement to the Majlis on 20 November 1907, quoted in Firīdūn Ādamīyat, *Īdīʾūlūzhī-yi Nahẓat-i Mashrūṭīyat-i Īrān* p. 226.

[6] Nāẓim al-Islām Kirmānī, *Tārīkh-i Bīdārī-yi Īrānīān* (Tehran, 1332/1953), pp. 374 ff.

According to one of the telegrams they sent to Iran, those reasons were the protection of religion; the strengthening of the state; the progress and well-being of the people; and the protection of the life and honour of the Muslims.[7] So clear, indeed, was the connection between constitutionalism and the attainment of these goals that they invoked the celebrated Shīʿī formula for *jihād*: "Any effort to establish the constitution is equivalent to a jihād waged under the command of the Lord of the Age".[8]

Other ʿulamā came to oppose the theory and practice of constitutionalism with equal vigour. Chief among them was the powerful mujtahid of Tehran, Shaikh Fażl-Allāh Nūrī. After participating in the early stages of the movement, he began, in the spring of 1907, to turn the weight of his authority against the constitutionalist cause. He claimed that the original purpose of the movement – the establishment of an assembly that would enact the laws of the *sharīʿa* – had been subverted by the emergence among the constitutionalists of "members of the new sects and the naturalists".[9] Despite a significant victory in the debates on the Supplementary Fundamental Law – the establishment of a committee of mujtahids to ratify all legislation – he withdrew to the shrine at Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm in July 1907 as a gesture of protest. In a series of broadsheets published from the shrine, he further developed his objections to constitutionalism, denouncing it as an importation from Europe incompatible with Islam and therefore *bidʿat* ("reprehensible innovation"), and called instead for *mashrūṭa-yi mashrūʿa*, i.e., a constitutional government based upon, or at least compatible with, the *sharīʿa*.[10] This slogan soon became abbreviated to *mashrūʿa*, so that the ʿulamā and their followers were polarized around the issue of mashrūṭa versus mashrūʿa. As Ṭabāṭabāʾī and Bihbahānī had their supporters in Najaf, so too did Nūrī: Sayyid Muḥammad Kāẓim Yazdī (d. 1919), at first inclined to neutrality on the issue, was gradually persuaded to oppose constitutionalism, supported by the Arab Shīʿīs of Iraq and the Ottoman authorities.[11]

The most detailed and coherent response to Nūrī's attacks on constitutionalism came from the pen of another *ʿālim* at Najaf, Mīrzā Muḥammad Ḥusain Nāʾīnī (d. 1936), a pupil of Ākhūnd Khurāsānī. In his *Tanbīh al-Umma va Tanzīh al-Milla* ("Admonition of the Community and A Warning to the Nation"),

[7] Kasravī, *op. cit.*, p. 617.

[8] See Hairi, "Why did the *ʿUlamā* participate in the Persian Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1909?", p. 144.

[9] See Hairi, "Shaykh Fażl Allāh Nūrī's Refutation of the Idea of Constitutionalism", p. 331.

[10] The proclamations of Nūrī have been published by Muḥammad Turkumān under the title *Rasāʾil, Iʿlāmiyahā, Maktūbāt va Rūznāma-yi Shaikh-i Shahīd Fażlullāh Nūrī* (Tehran, 1362/1983).

[11] See Said Amir Arjomand, "The Ulama's Traditionalist Opposition to Parliamentarianism", p. 181.

Nā'īnī threw back the charge of *bid ͨat* at Nūrī and his party, claiming that the rejection of constitutionalism led ineluctably to support for tyranny, which was bidͨat in itself. Addressing himself to the undeniable novelty of constitutionalism, Nā'īnī presented it as a means of reducing the usurpatory nature of rule during the occultation of the Imam, whose authority he invoked by casting his arguments in the form of a dream where the Imam had addressed him.[12]

Highly significant, and not always properly appreciated, is the common ground that existed between the constitutionalist ͨulamā and their opponents. Both parties were agreed, for example, that the legislative functions of the Majlis should be restricted to *ͨurfīyāt*, i.e., matters not already decided on by the sharīͨa; that freedom of expression should not extend to matters deemed repugnant by Islam; and that equality should not be taken to mean identical rights for Muslims and non-Muslims or for men and women.[13] Their convergence of views on these and associated matters was hidden by the passions of the time and by the fact that each of the parties had its tactical allies: the constitutionalist ͨulamā, the secular liberals in the Majlis; and the so-called reactionaries, the royal court. Both groups of ͨulamā were motivated primarily by a concern for the preservation of Iran as an Islamic entity, and they differed primarily in their estimate of constitutionalism as a means to that end. This became fully apparent with the Russian attack on Iran in 1911, when the ͨulamā sank their differences to call for the defence of Muslim territory against the invaders.[14]

Even before that event, the constitutionalist ͨulamā's enthusiasm had been dampened by the execution of Shaikh Fażl-Allāh Nūrī in July 1909 at the hands of revolutionary forces, which was seen by them as an affront to the whole clerical estate, and still more by the assassination, almost exactly a year later, of Sayyid ͨAbd-Allāh Bihbahānī, by secular extremists associated with one wing of the Majlis. Ākhūnd Khurāsānī is said to have foresworn all further support for constitutionalism, and Nā'īnī to have had all available copies of his book thrown in the Tigris.[15]

The net result of the Constitutional Revolution for the ͨulamā – their most sustained and substantial exercise in political involvement to that date – was to induce in them distrust of constitutionalism and related forms of political activity. After 1911, various independent ͨulamā, unconnected with the religious institution, like Sayyid Ḥasan Mudarris during the early years of the

[12] For a detailed account of Nā'īnī's work, see Hairi, *Shīͨism and Constitutionalism in Iran*, pp. 165 ff.

[13] See, for example, Māzandarānī's views quoted in Kirmānī, pp. 238–40.

[14] See Arjomand's article for an excellent analysis of these matters.

[15] Hairi, *Shīͨism and Constitutionalism in Iran*, p. 124. Nā'īnī's work was not, however, forgotten; it was reprinted in 1955 by Āyatullāh Ṭālaqānī, with an introduction stressing its continued validity.

Pahlavī regime and Āyatullāh Abuʾl-Qāsim Kāshānī in the postwar period, continued to involve themselves in efforts for implementing the constitution. But the leading ʿulamā, especially those enjoying the prestige of *marjaʿīyat*, held determinedly aloof; for several decades their political activity remained sporadic and reactive. ʿUlamā in general, however, continued to be prominent in movements of resistance to foreign powers.

Thus when in 1911 Russia invaded Iran, attempting to restore Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāh to the throne, coincidentally at a time when Italy had launched its onslaught on Libya, *fatvā*s were issued in Najaf by Ākhūnd Khurāsānī, Sayyid Muḥammad Kāẓim Yazdī, Shaikh ʿAbd-Allāh Māzandarānī, and Shaikh al-Sharīʿa Iṣfahānī, calling for resistance to the infidel invaders in both Iran and Libya.[16] Not content with the issuing of fatvās, Māzandarānī organized a military force to fight the Russians in Iran, but partly because of the sudden demise of Khurāsānī and partly because of reassuring messages sent by the Iranian government, the force never proceeded beyond Kāẓimain.[17]

In the First World War, Iran officially proclaimed its neutrality, but both Britain and Russia undertook military operations on its territory. A large part of Iranian opinion sympathized in any event with the Ottomans and their allies, and a national government, opposed to Britain and Russia, was established in Qum; before long, it had to retreat first to Kirmānshāh and then to Istanbul. One of the leading figures of this government was Sayyid Ḥasan Mudarris, later to attain fame as the exemplary foe of Riżā Shāh. While generally sympathetic to the Ottomans, Mudarris is said to have had sharp exchanges with officials in Istanbul, largely because of suspicions that the Ottomans were planning to annex Āẕarbāijān.[18]

At the *ʿatabāt*, many of the Iranian ʿulamā, together with their Arab colleagues, issued fatvās calling for jihād against the foes of the Ottomans.[19] In this, they were motivated not only by Pan-Islamic feelings (which had been revived after the Young Turk Revolution of 1908), but also by fear for the Shīʿī holy places, menaced by the British invasion of Iraq. Decrees for jihād were given by Sayyid Muḥammad Kāẓim Yazdī, Mīrzā Muḥammad Taqī Shīrāzī (d. 1920), and Shaikh al-Sharīʿa Iṣfahānī. Some of the ʿulamā participated personally in the fighting against the British, playing a particularly notable rôle in the long and bloody battle at Kūt al-ʿAmāra in 1916. Sayyid Muṣṭafā Kāshānī, the father of

16 Hairi, "The Responses of Libyans and Iranians to Imperialism", p. 281.
17 Aḥmad Kasravī, *Tārīkh-i Hiẓhdah Sāla-yi Āẕarbāījān*, p. 246.
18 Makkī, *Mudarris: Qahramān-i Āzādī* I, pp. 141–2.
19 Davānī, *Nahẓat-i Rūḥānīyūn-i Īrān* I, pp. 211–12.

Āyatullāh Kāshānī, was wounded there, and when the British finally triumphed, a number of ʿulamā, including Shīrāzī, were taken prisoner.[20]

Jihād movements arose within Iran itself, especially in Fārs. When a British force occupied Būshahr (Bushire), local khans organized a resistance movement that enjoyed the support of several ʿulamā, chief among them Shaikh Muḥammad Ḥusain Burāzjānī (d. 1936). Even before the occupation, Burāzjānī had clashed frequently with the British Consul-General in Būshahr, and now he issued a fatvā calling for jihād that was distributed along the Persian Gulf coast. Although the British succeeded in occupying Burāzjān, center of the jihād, resistance continued. In Shīraz, additional fatvās were issued by Sayyid ʿAbd-Allāh Bilādī Bihbahānī, a mujtahid from Būshahr, and Shaikh Jaʿfar Maḥallātī (d. 1938); the latter organized a column of volunteers which he led toward Būshahr by way of Kāzarūn. The British evacuated Būshahr before he could do battle with them. Maḥallātī was also influential in instigating an uprising of the Shīrāz gendarmerie that led to the temporary expulsion from the city of the British Consul.[21]

Distinct from the jihād around Būshahr was the struggle against the South Persia Rifles, a force organized by the British to protect their interests in southern Iran. The struggle was led by a khan of the Qashqāʾī, Ismāʿīl Khān Ṣaulat al-Daula, with the support of Sayyid ʿAbd al-Ḥusain Mujtahid Lārī (d. 1924). A pupil of Mīrzā Ḥasan Shīrāzī, Lārī had already distinguished himself through activities in support of the constitution and frustrating Christian missionary efforts in Fārs. He too issued a fatvā calling for jihād against the British and recruited volunteers for Ṣaulat al-Daula's force. Despite initial successes, the *mujāhidīn* fell prey to internal dissension, and their movement effectively collapsed some months before the end of the First World War.[22]

The aftermath of the war saw the rise of two insurrectionary movements of general Islamic and patriotic inspiration. Unlike the jihād movements, these both took place in the north of Iran.

Shaikh Muḥammad Khiyābānī, leader of the Tabrīz insurrection, was a religious scholar of medium standing: all his studies had taken place in Āẕarbāījan, and he never attained the rank of mujtahid. Nonetheless, he enjoyed great prestige in Tabrīz, and he represented the city in the second Majlis. He was active during the First World War against the Ottoman forces in Āẕarbāījān. In 1920, together with his colleagues from the Democrat Party of Āẕarbāījān,

[20] Sir Arnold Wilson, *Loyalties*, pp. 99.
[21] Concerning all these events, see Davānī, *op. cit.*, I, pp. 247–362.
[22] Davānī, II, pp. 8–60.

Khiyābānī instituted an autonomous revolutionary government in Tabrīz that renamed Āẕarbāījān as Āzādistān ("Land of Freedom"). Khiyābānī's government lasted for sixth months before its suppression at the hands of the Iranian Cossack Brigade.[23] Although restricted to Āẕarbāījān, Khiyābānī's movement was not separatist in intention; an echo of the constitutionalist movement, it was patriotic in its aims, and Islamic in its emotional underpinning.

A more prolonged and significant movement was that launched in the forests of the Caspian littoral by Mīrzā Yūnus, better known as Mīrzā Kūchik Khān. Not only was it the first guerilla movement in modern Iranian history; it also posed for the first time the problems inherent in any collaboration between Muslims and the left. Mīrzā Kūchik Khān began life as a student of the religious sciences, first in his native city and then at the Maḥmūdīya *madrasa* in Tehran. The royalist coup of 1908 caused him to abandon his studies and join the constitutionalist fighters in his native Rasht. In 1917, he launched a movement of armed revolt directed both against the authority of the central government and against the presence of British and Russian forces in Iran. The Jangalī movement (so-called because of its use of the forests of Gīlān as a base) passed through numerous vicissitudes before its final defeat in October 1921, when Riżā Khān (later Shāh) entered Rasht at the head of the Cossack Brigade. At the height of its power, the Jangalī movement had 6,000 men under arms; was able to extend its influence into Māzandarān; and gained *de facto* recognition from the British for the government it established.[24]

The ideological identity of the movement is a confused and controversial matter. Mīrzā Kūchik Khān is reputed to have been punctilious in fulfilling his devotional duties; the newspaper *Jangal*, organ of the movement, proclaimed its aims to be "protection of the rights of the Iranians and the enlightenment of the Muslims"; and its first organizational core was provided by the Haiʾat-i Ittiḥād-i Islām ("Committee for Islamic Union") of Rasht.[25] However, the Jangalī movement also counted among its members many of the first generation of Iranian Marxists; the government it established in June 1920 bore the official designation of the Soviet Republic of Gīlān; and it established military and political links with the Bolshevik Revolution. Mīrzā Kūchik Khān himself was wont to speak of "red revolution", "the struggle of the toilers against capitalism", and socialism; and when he protested to Lenin about the anti-religious

[23] For a complete account of the movement, see A. Āẕarī, *Qiyām-i Shaikh Muḥammad Khiyābānī.*

[24] On the Jangalī movement, see Ibrāhīm Fakhrāʾī, *Mīrzā Kūchik Khān Sardār-i Jangal*, and Shāpūr Ravāsānī, *Nihẓat-i Mīrzā Kūchik Khān-i Jangalī.*

[25] Davānī, II, p. 82.

propaganda conducted by Russian Bolsheviks posted to Gīlān, he cited only the intensity of popular religious feeling in Iran, not any question of principle.[26] It would be tempting to see in Mīrzā Kūchik Khān the Iranian equivalent of the Muslim "National Communists" of Russia. Apparently, however, he maintained his Islamic beliefs and identity while borrowing heavily from the Bolshevik vocabulary of revolution and believing – erroneously, as he came to realize – in the possibility of a tactical alliance with the Bolshevik Revolution.[27]

Eight months before he marched into Rasht, to suppress the last remnants of the Jangalī movement, Rizā Khān had carried out a *coup d'état* in Tehran which was to be the first step on his path to dictatorial power and the foundation of the Pahlavī dynasty in December 1925. The sixteen years of rule by the first Pahlavī can fairly be described as a period of intense hostility to Islamic culture and institutions; what western authors have approvingly called "reform" and "modernization" was experienced by many – if not most – Iranians as a brutal assault on their culture, traditions and identity.[28] Nonetheless, no significant obstacles were placed in the way of Rizā Shāh by the chief religious authorities as he rose to power. This was in part due to their disillusionment with constitutionalism, and in part due to the misleading effect created by Rizā Shāh's assiduous and visible attendance at religious ceremonies before his position was consolidated. But important, too, were a set of political contingencies connected with Iraq.

The political activities of the Iranian ʿulamā resident in Iraq did not come to an end with the First World War. Both Mīrzā Muḥammad Taqī Shīrāzī and Shaikh al-Sharīʿa Iṣfahānī opposed the British mandatory régime in Iraq, and when they died within a few months of each other in 1920, others came forward to take their place: Nāʾīnī; Abuʾl-Ḥasan Iṣfahānī (another student of Ākhūnd Khurāsānī); and Shaikh Muḥammad Mahdī Khāliṣī, an Arab ʿālim. In 1922, the three organized a meeting in Karbalā, attended by about 300,000 people, protesting against British policy. The following year, Khāliṣī was deported to the Ḥijāz, while Nāʾīnī and Iṣfahānī, together with other Iranian ʿulamā, were compelled to leave for Iran. There they were well received, by both the

[26] Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 96. It is worth pointing out that even some of the leading *ʿulamā* of the *ʿatabāt* had contacts – admittedly slight and inconsequential – with Bolshevik agents in the early 1920s. See Hanna Batatu, pp. 1141–7.

[27] See the letter of Mīrzā Kūchik Khān to his followers reproduced by Ibrāhīm Fakhrāʾī under the title "Sanadī Muntashir nashuda az Sardār-i Jangal", *Kayhān-i Farhangī* II 9 (Āẕar 1364/November 1985), pp. 20–1.

[28] See the perceptive remarks of Aboldjavad Falaturi in "Die iranische Gesellschaft unter dem Einfluss der westlichen Kultur", in Günter Esters and Jochem Langkau, pp. 67–9.

government and the public, and in August 1923 they took up temporary residence in Qum.[29]

In March 1924, negotiations with King Faisal of Iraq made it possible for them to return to the ᶜatabāt, but their unsure position in Iraq may have predisposed them to look favorably on Riżā Khān. Shortly before they set out for Iraq, they met him in Qum, together with Shaikh ᶜAbd al-Karīm Ḥāʾirī, revivifier of the teaching institution (*ḥauza*) in Qum. They asked Riża Khān (then Minister of War) to quell rumors of the impending substitution of a republic, under his auspices, for the Qājār dynasty, republicanism being regarded with abhorrence because of the association it had acquired with irreligion in neighbouring Turkey. Riżā Khān complied soon after, in a telegram addressed to the ᶜulamā of Tehran.[30] His wish to found a republic, as a means of installing himself in power, had probably been authentic, and the fact that he now renounced it in response to appeals from the ᶜulamā tended to bestow on him, in the short term, an appearance of legitimacy he would not otherwise have had. In October, 1924, a fatvā was published over the signatures of Iṣfahānī and Nāʾīnī declaring obedience to Riżā Khān a religious duty.[31] Doubts have been expressed on the authenticity of the fatvā, but it was never repudiated by either Nāʾīnī or Iṣfahānī. In any event, they consented to receive Riżā Khān when he visited Najaf after their return to Iraq, and the meeting appears to have been cordial. Nāʾīnī died in 1936, and Abuʾl-Ḥasan Iṣfahānī, who from then until his own death in 1946 was virtually the sole marjaᶜ-i taqlīd of the Shīᶜī world, refrained consistently from all political activity and comment for the rest of his life.[32]

An important exception to the rule of ᶜulamā acquiescence in Riżā Shāh's conquest of power was provided by Sayyid Ḥasan Mudarris. Born in 1870 into a family of preachers, he studied first in Iṣfahān and then at the ᶜatabāt, under Mīrzā Ḥasan Shīrāzī in Sāmarrā and both constitutionalist and anti-constitutionalist scholars in Najaf. He became himself a convinced constitutionalist, and was elected to the second and third Majlises as a deputy from Iṣfahān. Prominent in the affairs of the National Government during the First World War, he returned to parliamentary life at the end of the war as Deputy Speaker of the fourth Majlis. Re-elected to the fifth Majlis, he strove energetically but unsuccessfully – in collaboration with Dr Muḥammad Muṣaddiq – against the convening of a special constituent assembly for ratifying the foundation of the

[29] Ḥusain Makkī, *Tārīkh-i Bīst-sāla-yi Īrān* II, pp. 253–5.
[30] Makkī, Tārikh III, p. 15.
[31] Hairi, *Shīᶜism and Constitutionalism in Iran*, p. 146.
[32] On the career of Iṣfahānī, see Algar, "Abūʾl-Ḥasan Eṣfahānī".

Pahlavī dynasty. He was able to survive for a time verbal and physical assaults by the supporters of Riżā Shāh, but in 1929 he was arrested and banished to Khwāf near the Afgan border. Eight years later he was transferred to Kāshmar, where he was killed by a combination of poisoning and strangulation.[33] The example of Mudarris' militancy, coupled with the simplicity, even ascetism, of his personal life, helped to keep alive ᶜulamā traditions of hostility to monarchy during the years of Riżā Shāh's otherwise weakly contested autocracy.

The Pahlavī assault on the position of the ᶜulamā in Iranian society began with a conscription law in May 1925 that arrogated to the state the right to examine religious students with a view to their exemption from military service. Then came the promulgation of a Civil Code, under the auspices of ᶜAlī Akbar Dāvar, Minister of Justice, ratified in May 1928. The attack on the legal and juridical functions of the ᶜulamā that this implied continued, in November 1931, with the restriction of the competence of sharīᶜa tribunals to matters of marriage, divorce, and the appointment of trustees and guardians; and in March 1932, with the termination of all notarial functions exercised by the ᶜulamā. The latter measure reduced to penury many lesser religious scholars who did not have access to the resources of the *auqāf* (endowments). Similarly, in 1936, legislation was passed that effectively excluded ᶜulamā from holding the position of judge.

Riżā Shāh was not content to exclude the ᶜulamā from the administration of law. In 1928, a law was passed providing for state examination of religious students and the licensing of religious teachers. Taken further by a law in 1931 that provided for the establishment of a syllabus for all *madrasa*s, this was an unprecedented attempt to carry the hegemony of the state into the very heart of the religious institution. In December 1928, Riżā Shāh promulgated (in imitation of Atatürk, his mentor in many such matters) the Uniform Dress Law which made it obligatory for men to wear a round peaked cap; exempted only were religious scholars and students whose status, in this case too, the government took it upon itself to confirm.[34] Still more offensive to most of contemporary Iranian opinion was the compulsory uncovering of women which was decreed in a law promulgated on 7 January 1936 and enforced with considerable vigour. Finally, mention may be made of the Endowments Law of November, 1934 which gave the state wide discretionary powers to intervene in the administration of the *auqāf* and assume functions formerly fulfilled by the ᶜulamā.[35]

[33] On the life of Muddarris, see Makkī, *Mudarris*; Ibrāhīm Khwāja-Nūrī, *Bāzīgarān-i ᶜAṣr-i Ṭalāʾī: Mudarris*; and Nādᶜalī Hamadānī, *Mudarris*.

[34] On all these measures, see Shahrough Akhavi, *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran*, pp. 37–40. [35] *Ibid.*, pp. 56–8.

In addition to all these measures, religious ceremonies, especially those connected with the commemoration of Imām Ḥusain's martyrdom at Karbalā, were subject to harassment or outright prohibition; this was true even of Qum and Mashhad.[36] The whole Pahlavī enterprise was, moreover, undergirded with the attempt to create a surrogate, state-sanctioned culture, based on a cult of modernism and ethnic nationalism, that was designed to destroy by attrition the cultural hegemony of Islam in Iran.

So ambitious a programme could not fail to elicit occasional expressions of powerful hostility, despite the quiescence of the leading ʿulamā and despite Riżā Shāh's fairly effective apparatus of repression. Already in 1924, a minor uprising had occurred in Iṣfahān, led by two ʿulamā, Ḥājj Āqā Nūr-Allāh Iṣfahānī and Mullā Ḥusain Fishārakī. It was occasioned in the first place by government attempts to turn opium cultivation into a state monopoly, but other and more general grievances were expressed. Ḥājj Āqā Nūr-Allāh gathered a throng of merchants, artisans and peasants, at the head of which he marched on Qum, with the intention of picking up additional support and proceeding to Tehran. Once in Qum, the movement stalled, and Ḥājj Āqā Nūr-Allāh died under suspicious circumstances.[37]

Four years later, an ʿulamā-led movement of protest against compulsory military service took place in Tabrīz. The bazaar merchants closed their shops when the recruiting mission arrived from Tehran, and were persuaded to reopen only when three recently imported machineguns were set up at the entrance to the bazaar. The two chief mujtahids of the city who had co-ordinated the movement, Shaikh Abuʾl-Ḥasan Angajī (d. 1939) and Mīrzā Ṣādiq Āqā (d. 1932), were banished, first to Kurdistān and then to Qum.[38]

In March of the same year, an *ʿālim* in Qum, Āyatullāh Muḥammad Taqī Bāfqī (d. 1946), found himself confronting Riżā Shāh in person after he had publicly upbraided women from the court who were visiting the shrine bare-headed. Bāfqī, who had already written to Riżā Shāh in protest against his policies, sent the women a message saying: "if you are Muslim, why have you come here in this state, and if you are not Muslim, why have you come here at all?" Riżā Shāh then came to Qum at the head of an armoured column, dragged Bāfqī down from the *minbar*, and carried him off to prison in Tehran.[39]

[36] In an interview granted the present writer in December 1979, Āyatullāh Khumainī recalled that the practice of *rauża-khwānī* in the shrine at Qum would often lead to the arrest of the participants. See Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, p. 333.

[37] See Yaḥyā Daulatābādī, *Tārīkh-i Muʿāṣir* IV, pp. 294–7 and Davānī, II, 157–8.

[38] Ahmad Mahrad, p. 98; Davānī, II, p. 156.

[39] See Algar, "Bāfqī, Moḥammad-Taqī, Ayatollah".

The most serious incident in the reign of Riżā Shāh – that which most closely foreshadowed the events of 1963 and beyond – took place in Mashhad in 1935. One of the chief *ᶜulamā* of the city, Ḥājj Āqā Ḥusain Qummī, left Mashhad with the intention of presenting his grievances, principally concerning the wearing of European-style hats, to Riżā Shāh in person. He took up residence at Shāh ᶜAbd al-ᶜAẓīm and soon a flood of people came from Tehran to see him. The house where he was staying was sealed off by the police, and Qummī found himself a prisoner. When news of his predicament reached Mashhad, on 12 July, people gathered in protest at the shrine of Imām Riżā. Troops entered the shrine, firing indiscriminately, and dispersed the protestors. It happened to be the anniversary of the day in 1912 when Russian troops had fired on the shrine. Two days later, the well-known preacher Buhlūl addressed a second protest meeting, at the Gauhar Shād mosque. Once the gathering was underway, the army closed all gates to the mosque, machineguns were mounted on its walls, and the troops began firing.[40] The result was the largest single massacre enacted by the Pahlavīs before the events of June 1963. Buhlūl himself managed to escape to Afghanistan, where he was imprisoned for many years before making his way to Iraq and then, after the Islamic Revolution, back to Iran.[41] Qummī was exiled to Iraq, where he died in 1949. Numerous other ᶜulamā – notably Āqāzāda Kafāʾī, the son of Ākhūnd Khurāsānī – were arrested and imprisoned in Tehran.[42]

In effect, although not in intention, the most important response of the ᶜulamā to the policies of Riżā Shāh was the renewal and development of the religious teaching institution (ḥauza) in Qum by Shaikh ᶜAbd al-Karīm Ḥāʾirī. His scholarly and administrative achievements, amplified and confirmed by those of Āyatullāh Burūjirdī, enabled Qum to become a bastion first of Islamic learning and then of Islamic militancy, thus defying the secularizing tendencies of the two Pahlavīs. Born near Yazd in 1860, Ḥāʾirī studied under great authorities of the ᶜatabāt such as Mīrzā Ḥasan Shīrāzī and Ākhūnd Khurāsānī, who were notable for their political as well as their scholarly activities. Early on, however, he displayed an aversion to political involvement that remained with him throughout his career. When controversies surrounding the constitution erupted in Najaf, he left for Arāk, only to find even that relatively minor city engulfed in political turmoil. He therefore returned to Iraq, moving back and forth between Najaf and Karbalā to avoid the storm of politics. In sharp contrast

[40] For a full account of the events at Gauhar Shād, including eyewitness reports by survivors, see Vāḥid, *Qiyām-i Gauhar Shād*. [41] Davānī, II, pp. 146–9.

[42] See the account given by Āyatullāh Khumainī – who saw Kafāʾī in Tehran – in a speech in November 1977; text in anon., *Shahīdī dīgar az rūḥānīyat*, p. 42.

to the majority of his colleagues, he was not involved even in the jihād movement of 1911. In 1913, he moved back to Arāk, leading there an uneventful life of teaching and scholarship until 1922.[43]

It was then that he was persuaded to move to Qum and revive the ḥauza of that city. Qum had been an early centre of Shīʿī scholarship, and its madrasas had enjoyed high repute as recently as the early 19th century. By the beginning of the 20th century, however, many of them had fallen into disuse and ruin, and the chief significance of Qum was as place of pilgrimage. The first steps to reviving the ḥauza were taken by Āyatullāh Faiż Qummī, who established his teaching circle in Qum in 1916; Āyatullāh Bāfqī, who settled there in 1919; and Sayyid Abuʾl-Ḥasan Rafīʿī Qazvīnī, a teacher of gnosis and philosophy. It was Bāfqī who went to Arāk at the head of a delegation of the scholars of Qum to persuade Ḥāʾirī to move there.[44]

Ḥāʾirī was followed to Qum by many of his students from Arāk, including Rūḥ-Allāh Khumainī, then twenty years old. His presence in Qum also proved a magnet for many other prominent scholars, such as Āyatullāh Ṣadr al-Dīn Ṣadr (d. 1954), Āyatullāh Muḥammad Kāẓim Sharīʿatmadārī (d. 1986), and Āyatullāh Shihāb al-Dīn Marʿashī (still living).[45] Ḥāʾirī remained, however, the undisputed director (*zaʿīm*) of the entire ḥauza until his death in 1936, and as such might have provided a focus for religious opposition to Riżā Shāh. But only once was he moved to protest, in circumspect terms, against government policy: in 1928 he sent a telegram to the Shah objecting to the Uniform Dress Law.[46] Recent writers, seeking to uphold the thesis of an unbroken line of ʿulamā opposition to the state, have attributed Ḥāʾirī's quietism to a far-sighted concern for the welfare and preservation of ḥauza at a time of intense autocracy.[47] It is more probable that it was the product of his temperament, a habit established before he came to Qum. Nonetheless, the effect of his apparent indifference to the policies of the régime was indeed to secure for the ḥauza the minimal government tolerance it needed to survive.

In September 1941, Riżā Shāh was deposed by the Allies, and after a brief period in which the British contemplated a Qājār restoration, his son, Muḥammad Riżā, was permitted to succeed him. The change of ruler, combined

[43] On the life of Ḥāʾirī, see Rāzī, *Āsār al-Ḥujja* I, p. 51; Muḥammad Mahdī al-Mūsawī al-Iṣfahānī, *Aḥsan al-Wadīʿa*, pp. 268–9; and Hairi, *Shiʿism and Constitutionalism in Iran*, pp. 136 ff.

[44] See Algar, "Bāfqī".

[45] For a complete list of the ʿulamā who came to Qum during Ḥāʾirī's stewardship of the ḥauza, see Rāzī, *Ganjīna-yi Dānishmandān* I, pp. 216–79.

[46] See Rāzī, *Āsār al-Ḥujja* I, p. 51.

[47] See, for example, Davānī, II, pp. 333–5. Similar arguments are made, still less convincingly, on behalf of Āyatullāh Burūjirdī.

with the disruptions brought about by the Second World War and the competing interventions in Iran of Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union, permitted a resurgence of political activity under conditions of relative freedom. ʿUlamā soon came forward to explore the new possibilities: they demanded an end to the ban on Muḥarram celebrations and to the prohibition of Islamic dress for women.[48] Muḥammad Rizā Shāh, still unsure of himself, assented to these demands.

These were relatively unimportant matters, unconnected with the main issues that agitated Iran between the deposition of Rizā Shāh and the royalist coup of August 1953: limiting the powers of the monarchy and securing national independence, primarily through the nationalization of the oil industry. The most prominent among the ʿulamā who addressed themselves to these issues was Āyatullāh Abuʾl-Qāsim Kāshānī, who had early imbibed the lessons of militancy from his father, Sayyid Muṣṭafā, in Iraq. After the death of Sayyid Muṣṭafā, Āyatullāh Kāshānī had founded the Madrasa-yi ʿAlavī in Najaf, including military training in its curriculum, an unheard of innovation. Participating, like many other Iranian ʿulamā, in the resistance to the British, he found it necessary to leave Iraq for Iran in 1921. There he established initially friendly contacts with Rizā Shāh, and although he is said later to have protested against certain of his policies, there is no evidence of significant political activity on his part before the Second World War. He was arrested by the British in 1943 because of contacts with German agents and not released until 1945.[49]

His first postwar clash with the government came in 1946 when he was placed under house arrest near Qazvīn for opposing a law restricting freedom of the press. In May 1948, he called publicly for the dispatch of Iranian volunteers to Palestine to help forestall the establishment of a Jewish State; this was the first sign of emphatic interest shown by leading Iranian ʿulamā in the Palestine question and its ramifications. It was also the beginning of about three years' co-operation between Kāshānī and the organization of the Fidāʾīyān-i Islām. In 1949, Kāshānī was exiled to Beirut, ostensibly because of suspicions that he was involved in an attempted assassination of the Shah, but more probably because he had articulated – for the very first time – the demand for the nationalization of the Iranian oil industry. In the spring of 1950, he returned triumphantly to Iran and was elected to the Majlis.

Now began a period of collaboration between Kāshānī and the National

[48] Akhavi, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

[49] On the career of Kāshānī, see Faghfoory, *The Role of Ulama*; and Yann Richard, "Ayatullah Kashani – ein Wegbereiter der islamischen Republik?", in Kurt Greussing, pp. 277–305.

Front of Muṣaddiq (who was appointed prime minister in April 1951), aimed at securing the nationalization of the oil industry. A highpoint was reached when Kāshānī played a decisive rôle in organizing the mass demonstrations of 21 July 1952 that led to the fall of the government of Qavām al-Salṭana and the return of Muṣaddiq to the premiership with greater public support than before. Muṣaddiq showed himself unwilling to acknowledge his debt to Kāshānī, and relations between the two men came increasingly under strain. Attempts undertaken in January 1953 to effect a reconciliation proved fruitless, because of Muṣaddiq's insistence on retaining extraordinary powers and the fears that were aroused in Kāshānī – as well as other ʿulamā – by his increasingly friendly relations with the Tūda Party. Whether Kāshānī played a rôle in the royalist coup of August 1953, orchestrated by the British and American intelligence services, is a matter of controversy. What is certain is that he did nothing to stop it, and that individuals close to him – notably Āyatullāh Muḥammad Bihbahānī – played some rôle in securing its success.[50]

Kāshānī's old oppositional habits resurfaced under the post-Muṣaddiq dispensation: he protested against the resumption of diplomatic ties with Britain, the manipulation of elections to the Majlis, and the 1954 agreement concluded with an international consortium for the operation of the oil industry. In 1955, he was arrested, belatedly accused of complicity with the Fidāʾīyān-i Islām in the assassination of prime minister Razmārā in March 1951. But the government could afford to release him, in January 1956, for his political influence was at an end, and his death in March 1962 went largely unnoticed.[51]

Kāshānī was not the only ʿālim active in politics between 1941 and 1953. Mention may also be made of Āyatullāh Muḥammad Taqī Khwānsārī (d. 1952), who issued a fatvā in support of nationalizing the oil industry;[52] Āyatullāh Abuʾl-Fażl Zanjānī, who was continuously loyal to Muṣaddiq and the National Front; and Āyatullāh ʿAlī Akbar Burquʿī, who had links with Tūda-affiliated organizations.[53] The first post-war decade was also the time in which Āyatullāh Sayyid Maḥmūd Ṭālaqānī (d. 1979) began his long oppositional career: he broadcast on behalf of Muṣaddiq; attempted to prevent the split between him and Kāshānī; and preached at the Hidāyat mosque in central Tehran on themes both religious and political.[54] Firmly set against all political activity on the part of the ʿulamā

[50] A somewhat apologetic account of Kāshānī's role in the events of 1953 is given in anon., *Nigārishī kūtah*. Concerning the money allegedly distributed by Bihbahānī on behalf of the plotters, see Richard Cottam, *Nationalism in Iran*, p. 226. [51] Faghfoory, p. 291.

[52] See Hairi, "Khʷānsārī". [53] See Algar, "Borqaʿī, Ayatollah ʿAli Akbar".

[54] On these and later activities of Ṭālaqānī, see Afrāsiyābī, *Ṭālaqānī va Tārīkh*, and Algar, introduction to Taleghani (Ṭālaqānī), *Society and Economics in Islam*, pp. 9–21.

was Āyatullāh Āqā Ḥusain Burūjirdī, supreme religious authority of the period. After the death of Ḥāʾirī in 1936, a triumvirate composed of Āyatullāhs Ṣadr, Ḥujjat and Khwānsārī had administered the ḥauza in Qum, but this was understood to be a temporary expedient. In December 1944, a group of ʿulamā from Qum persuaded Burūjirdī to move to their city and assume leadership of the ḥauza. A little less than two years later, Abuʾl-Ḥasan Iṣfahānī, chief marjaʿ-i taqlīd of the day, died, and within roughly a year Burūjirdī had emerged as successor to his position. He thus came to combine in his person the functions of zaʿīm of the ḥauza and supreme marjaʿ-i taqlīd, and he remained the chief religious authority of the Shīʿī world until his death in March, 1961.[55]

Born in Burūjird in 1875, Āyatullāh Burūjirdī began to acquire his vast erudition in his native city before leaving for Iṣfahān in 1892 and Najaf in 1901 or 1902. There he became a favoured student of Ākhūnd Khurāsānī, without acquiring his constitutionalist proclivities, as well as studying with Sayyid Muḥammad Kāẓim Yazdī and Shaikh al-Sharīʿa Iṣfahānī. In 1910, he returned to Burūjird, where he remained almost uninterruptedly until the move to Qum at the end of 1944.

The ḥauza flourished under Burūjirdī's stewardship. He was a master of fiqh, and is said to have created a new school of that discipline, one going back beyond the well-known manuals of recent composition to the sources of Islamic law in Qurʾān and Tradition.[56] But equally important were his administrative and fiscal capacities. A central register of agents for the collection of revenue around the country for the support of the ḥauza was established for the first time, and it is estimated that by 1961 five million rials a month were being channelled to Qum.[57] This revenue permitted considerable building activity both in Qum (the Masjid-i Aʿẓam next to the shrine was built at Burūjirdī's behest) and elsewhere, and also helped to increase the number of the students at the ḥauza to some six thousand by the time of Burūjirdī's death.

Burūjirdī was a man of unusually broad vision. He patronized schools of modern type, where natural sciences were taught together with Islamic knowledge; sent emissaries to various countries in Africa, Asia and Europe; and instituted friendly contacts with the Azhar with a view to a Sunnī–Shīʿī rapprochement. However, he was almost unwaveringly quietist in political matters, going so far as to convene a conference of ʿulamā in February 1949 that sought to ban ʿulamā participation in political activity. Not averse to quiet

[55] See Āyatullāh Murtaẓā Muṭahharī, "Mazāya va Khadamāt-i Marḥūm Āyatullāh Burūjirdī", pp. 233–49; and Algar, "Borūjerdī, Ḥājj Āqā Ḥosain Ṭabāṭabāʾī, Ayatollah".

[56] Muṭahharī, *op. cit.*, p. 235. [57] See *Dunyā*, Farvardin 12, 1340/1 April 1961.

pressure on the government for limited purposes, he was in occasional touch with the court, both before and after August 1953. His only overt political activity came in the spring of 1955, when he lent his authority to the anti-Bahāʾī campaign of that year, and in February 1960, when he denounced the planned limitation of private agrarian holdings as contrary to Islamic law.[58] On the great political issues of the 1941–53 period, he remained adamantly silent.

The history of the first postwar decade is notable for the emergence of Islamic organizations that, radically different in their aims, had in common independence from direction or even significant participation by the ʿulamā. It can even be said that these organizations were motivated, to some degree, by what they perceived as the shortcomings of the clerical class, particularly its upper echelons.

Early in 1945, a 26-year old student of the religious sciences, Sayyid Mujtabā Mīrlauḥī, better known as Navvāb Ṣafavī, founded the Fidāʾīyān-i Islām, the first political grouping in 20th-century Iran to conceive of the goal of an Islamic state and to work actively toward attaining it.[59] Although the Fidāʾīyān were briefly allied with Kāshānī and for long enjoyed the support of Ṭālaqānī, their organization did not include even middle-ranking ʿulamā. As for Burūjirdī, he was bitterly opposed to the Fidāʾīyān and insisted on the removal of their Qum headquarters from the Faiżīya madrasa.[60] The constituency addressed by the Fidāʾīyān-i Islām was the religiously oriented segments of the disaffected urban poor; hence the radical methods they used and the programme they proposed.

The most conspicuous method used by the Fidāʾīyān was the assassination of persons considered dangerous to the interests of Islam and Iran. The first to be struck down by the Fidāʾīyān was the anti-Shīʿī writer and ideologue, Aḥmad Kasravī, killed in 1946. Then came the elimination of Minister of the Court, ʿAbd al-Ḥusain Hazhīr, in September 1949, and Prime Minister Razmārā in March 1951, both men being identified as agents of British policy in Iran. It is possible, though not proven, that the man who attempted to assassinate Muḥammad Riżā Shāh in February 1949 was a member of the Fidāʾīyān-i Islām.[61]

Like Kāshānī but earlier than him, the Fidāʾīyān-i Islām distanced themselves from Muṣaddiq, despite their support for his national goals; accordingly, Muṣaddiq had Navvāb Ṣafavī arrested in June 1951. The organization nonetheless survived and briefly renewed its collaboration with Kāshānī. It was

[58] Akhavi, *op. cit.*, pp. 77–79, 91–5.

[59] A well-documented history of the Fidāʾiyān-i Islām is Khūshnīyat, *Sayyid Mujtabā Navvāb Ṣafavī*. [60] Muḥammad Vāʿiẓzāda-Khurāsānī, p. 339. [61] See Faghfoory, p. 184.

thoroughly dispersed after the *coup* of August 1953. Ṣafavī and his chief lieutenant, Khalīl Ṭahmāsibī, were executed in January 1956, after manfully undergoing severe and prolonged torture. Although claimants to the mantle of Navvāb Ṣafavī emerged after the triumph of the Islamic Revolution (notably Ḥujjat al-Islām Ṣādiq Khalkhālī), the Fidāʾīyān-i Islām had no real prolongation beyond the 1950s. Their example of militancy did, however, foreshadow the rise of the Islamically oriented guerilla movements of the late 1960s and the 1970s.

Also of lasting interest was the radical political and social programme that the Fidāʾīyān-i Islām put forward. In *Rāhnamā-yi Ḥaqāʾiq* ("A Guide to Truths"), a manifesto published in late 1950, they demanded that the Shah be bound by Islamic law and constitutionally subject to dismissal and replacement if he contravened it.[62] They further demanded that "the legitimate rights of the poor must be given to them, in accordance with the criteria of Islam", and proposed measures such as the provision of free health-care, the construction of low-cost housing, and the free distribution of all uncultivated agrarian land. This programme, couched in harsh, uncompromising language, was the first sign of the concern for social justice that became marked among Muslim thinkers and writers of the 1970s.[63]

By contrast with the Fidāʾīyān-i Islām, the Anjumanhā-yi Islāmī ("Islamic Associations") that came into being in the 1940s reflected the needs and preoccupations of pious sections of the middle classes: their overwhelming concern was educational, to present Islam as a religion compatible with modernity, science and rationality, and to free it from what their members regarded as superstitions. Although few of those involved in the work of the associations were ʿulamā, they owed their origin to the *Kānūn-i Islām* ("Islamic Association"), an educational group founded in Tehran in 1941 by Āyatullāh Ṭālaqānī. In 1942, former members of the Kānūn-i Islām who were students at the Faculty of Medicine of Tehran University, established an Islamic Students' Association under the patronage of Mahdī Bāzargān, then professor of thermodynamics. Similar organizations soon came into being in Mashhad, Shīrāz and Tabrīz. When the members of these student associations graduated, they went on to found a series of Islamic professional organizations, the most important being those of the doctors, engineers and teachers. The chief activity of the associations was the organizing of lectures, many of which were later published in book form. Most of the writings of Bāzargān – important in the development of a modernist Islamic literature in Iran – had their origin in

[62] Anon., *Rahnamā-yi Ḥaqāʾiq*, pp. 112–13.
[63] See especially p. 13 of *Rahnamā-yi Ḥaqāʾiq*.

lectures delivered to the Islamic associations. With their concentration on cultural activity, directed to overcoming the alienation from Islam of many of the secularly educated, the Islamic Associations had considerable success; they paved the way for ʿAlī Sharīʿatī, who addressed the same problem more thoroughly and radically.[64]

Although the discussion of political topics was forbidden in the associations as a matter of policy, many of their members were active politically in parallel organizations: the Nahżat-i Muqāvamat-i Millī ("National Resistance Movement"), founded in 1953 by Āyatullāh Ṭālaqānī, and the Nahżat-i Āzādī-yi Īrān ("Freedom Movement of Iran") founded in 1961 by Ṭālaqānī, Bāzargān and Yad-Allāh Saḥābī. The latter movement, loosely affiliated to the National Front, was one of the most important oppositional organizations during the 1960s, a fact attested by the repeated imprisonment of its leadership.[65] Essentially a reformist group, it demanded implementation of the 1907 Constitution and attempted to harmonize Islamic and liberal-nationalist sentiment. Most members of the provisional government appointed by Imām Khumainī as the revolution was reaching its end belonged to the Nahżat-i Āzādī, and the movement has survived – although with increasing difficulty – down to the present.

The death of Burūjirdī in 1961 prompted not only the customary search for a successor (or successors) to the position of marjaʿ-i taqlīd, but also a re-examination of the function of the marjaʿ and, more broadly, of the rôle of religion in Iranian society. Burūjirdī's political rôle had proved disappointing, although few people (least of all his pupils) were prepared to say so openly, and in any event the modernist outlook fostered by men like Bāzargān sought to rationalize and make more effective the functioning of the marjaʿ. Thus a collective volume published in 1961 (soon reprinted because of its popularity) called for a collective marjaʿīyat, based on specialization by mujtahids in different areas of concern; complete financial autonomy for the religious institution; and the presentation of Islam, within the religious institution and to the public at large, as a total system of life and belief – an ideology.[66]

The first of these demands was made obsolete, and the last of them fulfilled, by the appearance of Imām (then Āyatullāh) Khumainī (d. 3 June 1989), first as a

[64] On the Islamic Associations, see Algar, "Anjoman II. Religious".

[65] For a brief history of the Nihżat-i Āzādī, see *Yādnāma-yi Bīstumīn Sālgard-i Nahżat-i Āzādī Īrān*, 2nd. ed. (Tehran, 1362/1983).

[66] The book was *Bahsī dar bāra-yi Marjaʿīyat va Rūḥānīyat*; it went through several editions. For a synopsis and analysis of its contents, see Lambton, "A Reconsideration".

marjaᶜ-i taqlīd and then as a spokesman for national grievances capable of reaching a mass audience. Khumainī first gained recognition as a marjaᶜ in Qum and was soon followed as such by many people across the country. Other mujtahids, however, also emerged as partial successors to the position of Burūjirdī: Āyatullāh Muḥsin al-Ḥakīm (d. 1970) and Abuᵓl-Qāsim Khūᵓī in Najaf; Āyatullāh Hādī Mīlānī (d. 1975) in Mashhad; and Āyatullāhs Marᶜashī, Gulpāygānī and Sharīᶜatmadārī in Qum. Even after the triumph of the Islamic Revolution, Khumainī did not become sole marjaᶜ-i taqlīd. Decisive for his unique historical impact was not the mechanics of taqlīd but the vibrant and powerful vision of Islam he developed early in life coupled with the ability to transmit it, imperiously and convincingly, to others: first to his students, and then to the Iranian nation at large. In 1962, the realization began to dawn that with Khumainī a completely new type of religious leadership had become available.[67]

Born in September 1902, in the south-west Iranian city of Khumain, to one Sayyid Muṣṭafā, son of an Iranian ᶜālim who had recently migrated back to Iran from India, Rūḥ-Allāh Khumainī lost his father in the first year of his life, killed by bandits as he was travelling to Arāk.[68] He was brought up by his mother and his paternal aunt, a resourceful and strong-willed woman, and then, after both women had died in a single year, by his elder brother, Murtażā (now know known as Āyatullāh Pasandīda). At the age of 19 he joined the circle of Shaikh ᶜAbd al-Karīm Ḥāᵓirī in Arāk, whom he promptly followed to Qum the next year. A brilliant scholar from the outset, Khumainī first excelled in *ᶜirfān*, that distinctive Shīᶜī form of gnosis that led a marginal and sometimes dangerous existence in the religious institution. Most of his early writings were on this topic, and it was also the first subject in which he offered instruction, having as his pupils such close associates as Āyatullāh Ḥasan ᶜAlī Muntaẓirī (who was at the time of writing the designated successor to Khumainī's constitutional functions as leader of the Islamic Republic) and Āyatullāh Murtażā Muṭahharī (d. 1979). As teacher and writer, Khumainī later moved on to other concerns, but practical involvement with ᶜirfān and the inner life remained an integral part of his personality, touching even on his political activity.

Early in his career at Qum, Khumainī also aroused attention through the

[67] Interview of the present writer with Ḥujjat al-Islām ᶜAlī Akbar Hāshimī Rafsanjānī, Tehran, 22 December 1979.

[68] On the life of Khumainī before 1962, see Algar, "Imam Khomeini, 1902–1962: The Prerevolutionary Years". My use of the title "Imām" for Khumainī, instead of the obsolete "Āyatullāh", still favoured by most Western writers, reflects current Iranian usage, which is based on the perception that he exerted a directive and guiding rôle beyond that of any Āyatullāh.

lectures he gave on ethics; having as their point of departure the well-known book on ethical advancement, the *Manāzil al-Sā'irīn* of Khwāja ʿAbd-Allāh Anṣārī (d. 1089), the lectures also touched on matters of political concern, and they drew a large audience from places as far afield as Tehran and Iṣfahān.[69] In general, however, as a still junior member of the religious institution, Khumainī was bound to defer to the example of quietism set by Ḥā'irī.

Some three years after the removal of Riżā Shāh, Khumainī made his first written proclamation of a political nature. Taking as his text Qur'ān, 34:46 ("Say: 'I enjoin upon you one thing only, that you rise up for God, singly and in pairs'"), a verse that he has often cited in different contexts, Khumainī stressed that the prophets themselves had "risen up for God"; while fully absorbed in the contemplation of God, they had fought to bring about transformations in the social and political conditions of men. By contrast, contemporary Muslims were "rising up" for the sake of worldly interests alone; the result was rule by foreign powers and their agents, like Riżā Shāh, "that illiterate Māzandarānī".[70]

Also in 1944, Khumainī wrote *Kashf al-Asrār* ("The Unveiling of Secrets"), a book which was in the first place the refutation of *Asrār-i Hazārsāla* ("Millennial Secrets"), an anti-religious tract written by a certain Hakīmzāda (pseudonym for the errant son of Ḥājj Shaikh Mahdī Qummī, an ʿālim in Qum), as well as the works of Aḥmad Kasravī. But equally important was the political component of *Kashf al-Asrār*: a sustained and bitter attack on the policies of Riżā Shāh (and, by implication, his successor) coupled with Khumainī's first adumbration of *vilāyat-i faqīh* ("the governance of the *faqīh*"), the doctrine which was to become the cornerstone of the constitution of the Islamic Republic. In *Kashf al-Asrār*, vilāyat-i faqīh is not yet presented as a self-evident truth, and some allowance is made for the institution of monarchy, providing the monarch is chosen by an assembly of properly qualified mujtahids and adheres to Islamic law. Even such an arrangement, however, would be provisional; it should obtain only "as long as no better system [*niẓām*] can be established".[71] Thirty five years later, he judged that possibility to have arisen.

Khumainī was among the ʿulamā of Qum who encouraged Burūjirdī to settle there in 1944. It is said that his support for him was inspired by the hope that he would engage himself more effectively in the political realm than Ḥā'irī had done.[72] This hope was disappointed, although Burūjirdī is reputed occasionally

[69] Concerning the impact these lectures made on their audience, see Murtażā Muṭahharī, *ʿIlal-i Girāyish ba Māddīgarī*, p. 9. [70] Khumainī, *Ṣaḥīfa-yi Nūr* I, pp. 3–7.
[71] *Kashf al-Asrār*, p. 186. [72] Rūḥānī, *Barrasī va Taḥlīlī* I, p. 98.

to have consulted Khumainī on political matters.[73] Apart from Burūjirdī, Khumainī had some contact with both Navvāb Ṣafavī and Āyatullāh Kāshānī, but between 1944 and 1962 he eschewed political activity in favour of the teaching of fiqh. In his classes on this subject, the core of the madrasa curriculum, Khumainī trained and inspired a whole generation of ʿulamā who went on to become the organizers of revolution. His classes were marked by an unusual ability to relate fiqh to gnostic, rational and political concerns, and were so popular that they became the best attended in Qum, with the single exception of those of Burūjirdī. After the death of Burūjirdī, the number attending them rose to 1,200, an unprecedented figure in the history of the ḥauza.[74]

Khumainī's public campaign against the Pahlavī state began in the autumn of 1962 when he led a successful campaign for the repeal of new laws governing elections to local and provincial councils. Those laws were regarded as objectionable because they removed the requirement that members of the councils be sworn into office on the Qurʾān; the fear was that this would permit Bahāʾīs open participation in political life.[75]

More significant clashes with the government came early the following year. A referendum was held on 26 January 1963 to obtain the appearance of popular support for a package of measures known officially as the White Revolution. The referendum was accompanied by widespread fraud and intimidation, especially in Qum, and the measures proposed for approval were perceived by many, including Khumainī, as strengthening the dictatorial authority of the Shah and American hegemony in Iran[76]. Hence Khumainī – foremost but not alone among the ʿulamā – began denouncing the Shah's régime with rising vehemence, criticizing also the unofficial but important links that the Shah was forging with Israel. On 22 March 1963, paratroopers attacked the Faiẓīya madrasa in Qum, the site of Khumainī's classes and preaching, in what was the largest and bloodiest assault on a religious gathering since the Gauhar Shād incident in 1935. Undeterred, Khumainī continued his condemnation of the government, focusing ever more specifically on the Shah himself. On the day of ʿĀshūrā, the anniversary of Imām Ḥusain's martyrdom (which fell in 1963 on 3 June), he denounced the government as "fundamentally opposed to Islam" and in league with Israel and the United States in hostility to the Qurʾān. He then

[73] Interview of the present writer with Dr Muḥammad Mufattiḥ, Tehran, 16 December 1979.

[74] Rūḥānī, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[75] For a detailed account of the episode, see *ibid.*, pp. 141–216.

[76] The effects of the White Revolution have been well summarized by Nikki Keddie as "laying the base for a state-dominated capitalism in city and countryside" (*Roots of Revolution*, p. 156).

warned the Shah that a day might come when he would have to flee Iran and the people would rejoice in the streets – an exact prediction of what happened on 16 January 1979.[77]

Khumainī was thereupon arrested, and an insurrection broke out in several cities across the country, everywhere led by ᶜulamā sympathetic to his cause. After several days of slaughter by the security forces, the Shah was able to surmount this, the most serious challenge to his position since the coup of 1953. However, the uprising of 15 Khurdād (the day in the Iranian calendar on which it began) marked the beginning of a new period in Iranian history in general, and ᶜulamā–state relations in particular. As the repressive and dictatorial nature of the Shah's régime hardened thereafter, fortified by the unwavering support of the United States, the goals of a growing segment of the ᶜulamā, led by Khumainī, became progressively more radical and ambitious; they also became more attractive to Iranian public opinion. The uprising can therefore be designated as the forerunner of the Islamic Revolution. It foreshadowed the revolution also in that secular political personalities and parties played no significant role in it.

Khumainī was released from arrest in August 1963, as a result of popular pressure on the régime, articulated by all the leading ᶜulamā of the day. He continued to denounce the government with the result that he was rearrested in October, being held this time until May 1964. Again he resumed his campaign, his denunciations of the government reaching a crescendo on 27 October 1964 when he condemned the recently concluded agreement on the status of American personnel in Iran as high treason.[78] Arrested for the third time, he was now sent into exile in Turkey. There he stayed until October 1965, when he was permitted – again as a result of pressure on the government – to leave for the more congenial and appropriate destination of Najaf, which was destined to be his home for thirteen years.

Contrary to what is sometimes supposed, Khumainī did not disappear from the public consciousness in Iran to re-emerge, almost accidentally, as the leader of the revolution in 1978. His name frequently surfaced in the course of anti-governmental demonstrations: for example, in those at Tehran University in December 1970 and those at Qum in June 1975. Nor was it a question simply of memories from 1963: throughout his period of residence in Najaf, Khumainī issued proclamations and messages concerning events in Iran (such as the coronation in 1967, the commemoration of 2,500 years of monarchy in Iran in

[77] Text of his address in Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, pp. 177–80.
[78] Text in *ibid.*, pp. 181–8.

1971, and the formation of the one-party system in 1975), which were smuggled into Iran and circulated there.

There also found its way to Iran the printed text of a series of lectures on the subject of Islamic government that he delivered in Najaf early in 1970. The subtitle of the book, *vilāyat-i faqīh* ("the governance of the *faqīh*") was a surer guide to its contents than the title, *Ḥukūmat-i Islāmī* ("Islamic Government"), for it was not Khumainī's concern to provide either a full account of the political philosophy of Shīʿī Islam or a detailed sketch of the structure of an Islamic state. His aim was rather to elucidate, in a more detailed and decisive manner than he had done in *Kashf al-Asrār*, the doctrine that the ʿulamā were the heirs to the political authority of the Twelve Imams, by reviewing all the relevant texts in Qurʾān and Tradition. To this textual discussion he appended a critique of the "pseudo-saintly" within the religious institution, who even after the uprising of June 1963 persisted in a pious avoidance of politics; and a summons to the ʿulamā to rise up and mobilize the people to establish Islamic government.[79]

Individuals and organizations were active inside Iran propagating Khumainī's messages and consolidating the movement that had come into being in 1963. Āyatullāhs Muṭahharī, Muntaẓirī, Bihishtī and Anvārī were known, in many circles, to be his representatives and to speak (although not explicitly) on his behalf. Occasionally some of them were able to visit him in Najaf, as did leaders of the Iranian Muslim students in Europe and North America, a group that became important in the aftermath of the revolution.[80] Soon after the exiling of Imām Khumainī, there came into being the Haiʾathā-yi Muʾtalifa-yi Islāmī ("Allied Islamic Associations"), an organization based in Tehran but having branches throughout the country.[81] Active in it were individuals who assumed important responsibilities after the revolution, notably Ḥujjat al-Islām ʿAlī Akbar Hāshimī Rafsanjānī, Dr Javād Bāhunar, and Muḥammad ʿAlī Rajāʾī. In January, 1965, four members of this organization, led by Muḥammad Bukhārāʾī, assassinated Ḥasan ʿAlī Manṣūr, the prime minister responsible for the exiling of Khumainī. They were executed soon after, and the organization came under severe attack, in spite of which it managed to survive.

The example of direct, armed action, given by Bukhārāʾī, was taken up in 1965 by the Ḥizb-i Milal-i Islāmī ("Islamic Nations' Party"), a group led by Muḥammad Kāẓim Bujnūrdī, son of an ʿālim resident in Najaf. Before they

[79] For a complete translation of *Ḥukūmat-i Islāmī*, see *ibid.*, pp. 27–166.

[80] Among those from America who visited him in Najaf were, for example, Ibrāhīm Yazdī and Muṣṭafa Chamrān, later Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence respectively in the provisional government after the triumph of the revolution.

[81] See Bādāmchiyān and Bināʾī, *Haiʾathā-yi Muʾtalifa-yi Islāmī.*

could put their plans into effect, the members of the group were discovered by the security police.[82]. Despite its short life, the Ḥizb-i Milal-i Islāmī, with its assumption that guerilla activity was more profitable than mass uprisings against the régime, influenced the rise of the more protracted guerilla movements of the 1970s.

Less overtly political than these organizations was the Ḥusainīya-yi Irshād, an institution in north Tehran designed – like the Islamic Associations led by Bāzargān and his colleagues – to win the secularly educated to Islam. Its immediate forerunner had been the Anjuman-i Māhāna-yi Dīnī ("The Monthly Religious Society"), organized in 1960 by Āyatullāh Muṭahharī. In collaboration with Āyatullāh Bihishtī and other well-known scholars, Muṭahharī arranged for monthly public lectures that sought to demonstrate the relevance of Islam to contemporary concerns; published under the title of *Guftār-i Māh* ("Discourse of the Month"), these lectures proved very popular. The association was banned in March 1963.[83]

The Ḥusainīya-yi Irshād opened its doors in 1965, administered by a board of governors that included Āyatullāh Muṭahharī, who also lectured at the institution and edited and contributed to many of its publications. However, the dominant and most influential figure at the Ḥusainīya-yi Irshād came to be the celebrated Dr ᶜAlī Sharīᶜatī. Muṭahharī found himself at odds with several points in Sharīᶜatī's outlook, and accordingly he discreetly withdrew from the Ḥusainīya-yi Irshād before its closure by the government in 1973.[84]

ᶜAlī Sharīᶜatī was born at Mazīnān near Sabzavār into a traditionally religious family that later settled in Mashhad.[85] His father, Muḥammad Taqī Sharīᶜatī, was prominent in local Islamic circles, and compiled a commentary on parts of the Qurʾān that was well received. The younger Sharīᶜatī's political engagement began early, while he was still a student at the University of Mashhad. Active on behalf of a short-lived group known as the Sūsyālīsthā-yi Khudāparast ("The God-Worshipping Socialists") and Āyatullāh Ṭālaqānī's Nahżat-i Muqāvamat-i Millī, he was jailed in 1959. Not long after his release, he went to study in Paris, a cardinal event in his life that allowed him to become acquainted with numerous currents of political and sociological thought. He studied under scholars such as Louis Massignon and Jacques Berque; established contact with the activists and

[82] See Rūḥānī, *op. cit.*, pp. 859–65. [83] Akhavi, *op. cit.* pp. 118–19.

[84] On the differences between Muṭahharī and Sharīᶜatī, see Algar, introduction to Muṭahharī, *Fundamentals of Islamic Thought*, pp. 15–16.

[85] Remarkably, no full biography of Sharīᶜatī has yet appeared; see, however, Akhavi, *op. cit.*, pp. 144–5; and Ghulām ᶜAbbās Tavassulī, biobibliographical introduction to Sharīᶜatī, *On the Sociology of Islam*, pp. 11–38.

ideologues of the Algerian Revolution, most importantly Frantz Fanon, whose *Wretched of the Earth* he translated into Persian; and helped to bring into being a European branch of the Nahżat-i Āzādī. The chief result of Sharīʿatī's sojourn in France was that, merging the insights and knowledge he had gained there with the traditional Islamic education he had received from his father, he was able to create a new form of religious discourse that proved immensely attractive in Iran, particularly to the young.[86]

Returning to Iran in 1964, Sharīʿatī was arrested at the frontier and detained for several months. In 1965, he was able to obtain a teaching post at the University of Mashhad, strangely enough in the Department of History, despite his well-known aversion for that discipline (at least as it was then cultivated in Iran). Soon dismissed because of the content of his teaching, Sharīʿatī moved to Tehran, where his remarkable lectures soon became the principal source of attraction at the Ḥusainīya-yi Irshād. After the closure of this institution, Sharīʿatī went into hiding, but he was soon discovered and imprisoned for some eighteenth months. After his release, he was kept under strict surveillance until May 1977 when he was permitted to leave for England. There, on 19 June, he died suddenly under mysterious circumstances that aroused immediate suspicions of foul play and earned for him, in the eyes of many, the rank of martyr.

The thought of Sharīʿatī defies easy condensation into a few central theses.[87] Unfinished, restless, speculative, subject to endless revision, his ideas represented – to borrow one of his own formulations – a "becoming" (*shudan*), not a "being" (*būdan*). Most of his books were, moreover, the slightly edited transcripts of the numerous lectures he gave, not carefully conceived philosophical or ideological exercises. But it was precisely in this urgent, provisional, exploratory quality of Sharīʿatī's work that much of its attraction lay.

Central to Sharīʿatī's thought and the influence it exerted was a radical distinction between Islam as culture and Islam as ideology. He denounced the former as devoid of social value, moral commitment and revolutionary potential, and espoused the latter as "the true Islam" – a revolutionary creed refusing compromise and imbued with the spirit of self-sacrifice. "I seek a return to Islam as ideology; what exists now (among the masses and the religious scholars) is Islam as culture."[88]

[86] A whole series of writers were indebted to Sharīʿatī for their terms and ideas; not significant as individuals, as a group they testify to the depth of his impact.

[87] See for analyses of his thought: Akhavi, *op. cit.*, pp. 150 ff; *idem*, "ʿAli Shariʿatis Gesellschaftstheorie"; Richard, *Der verborgene Imam*, pp. 113–22; Algar, "Social Justice"; and Yavari-d'Hellencourt, "Le radicalisme Shiʿite de ʿAli Shariʿati".

[88] Sharīʿatī, *Islāmshināsī* (Tehran, n.d.), p. 97.

A related distinction was that which he drew between Safavid Shiᶜism and ᶜAlavī Shiᶜism, the former being a reactionary distortion of the authentic creed and practice of the Twelve Imams, a reduction of it to superstition and empty formality.[89]

The return to Islam as ideology meant a new emphasis on the social rôle of religion, coupled with an impatient rejection of theological and metaphysical niceties. Thus he once described *tauḥīd* as "descending from the heavens to the earth" and "leaving circles of discussion and debate . . . to enter the affairs of society and pose the various questions that are involved in social relationships".[90] Tauḥīd implies an egalitarian, classless society; *shirk*, the clash of competing social classes. In the same connection, Sharīᶜatī elevated to the position of universal paradigm the struggle of Cain and Abel, mentioned only elliptically in the Qurᵓān: everywhere in history and society he discerned a "pole of Abel", led by the prophets and their true successors, and a "pole of Cain", composed of the usurpers of power and wealth and the official clergy subordinate to them.[91]

All of this meant a critical and revisionist attitude to the ᶜulamā themselves. It would be false to portray Sharīᶜatī as a simple anti-clerical. In one celebrated passage, he compared favorably the ᶜulamā's record of opposition to tyranny and foreign intervention with the treachery of numerous secular intellectuals.[92] Nonetheless, he did propound the fateful thesis of an "Islam minus *ākhūnd*s", and the language and terminology he used was of a nature to alienate many senior ᶜulamā. Thanks to the discretion of Muṭahharī and a prudent silence on the part of Āyatullāh Khumainī in Najaf, the tensions that were created by the phenomenon of Sharīᶜatī were held in check until the revolution, and the impact of his person and ideas counted for much in the triumph of that movement. Afterwards, however, the same tensions erupted with considerable force, providing some of the ideological background to the political contests that raged during the first two or three years of the Islamic Republic.

Politically and ideologically, Sharīᶜatī may be regarded as belonging to the line of Bāzargān, although he was an infinitely more radical and imaginative thinker. Likewise, the best-known Islamic guerilla movement of the 1970s, the Sāzmān-i Mujāhidīn-i Khalq ("The Organization of People's Strugglers") also can be characterized as the radical offspring of the Nahżat-i Āzādī.[93] The

[89] For a complete sketch of the distinctions he drew between the two types of Shiᶜism, see Richard, *op. cit.*, pp. 116–18. [90] *On the Sociology of Islam*, p. 32. [91] *Ibid.*, pp. 97–110.

[92] Sharīᶜatī, *Qāsiṭīn, Māriqīn, Nākiṣīn*, pp. 242–3.

[93] On the history of the Mujāhidīn-i Khalq, see Ḥaqqjū, *Mujāhidīn-i Khalq*; and Ervand Abrahamian, "The Guerilla Movement in Iran, 1963–1977".

movement was founded in 1971 by three members of the Nahżat-i Āzādī, closely associated with Āyatullāh Ṭālaqānī, Muḥammad Ḥanīf-Nizhād, Saʿīd Muḥsin, and ʿAlī Aṣghar Badīʿzādagān, all three of them men with university backgrounds. They were later joined by a number of others, including Aḥmad Riżāʾī, who wrote the first ideological text of the movement, *Nahżat-i Ḥusainī* ("The Movement of [Imām] Ḥusain"). This book presented the goals of Islam almost entirely in terms of a political struggle against capitalism and imperialism. Together with the opening formula, "In the Name of God *and* the Heroic People of Iran", it provided early evidence of the tilt to the left that propelled the main body of the Mujāhidīn to an open espousal of Maoist-style Marxism. The change in ideology came in May 1975, and was accompanied by the murder or betrayal to the security police of members still insistent on adhering to Islam.[94] Nonetheless, benefiting from the support of Ṭālaqānī, an Islamically-oriented group of Mujāhdīn continued to exist and be active.[95]

In addition to the Mujāhidīn, smaller and less well-known groups devoted to armed struggle also came into being in the 1970s: the Gurūh-i Inqilābī-yi Abū Ẕarr ("The Abū Ẕarr Revolutionary Group"), the Mahdavīyūn ("Followers of the Mahdī"), the Gurūh-i Allāhu Akbar ("The 'God is Greatest' Group"), and several others. Less burdened with ideological baggage than the Mujāhidīn, their remnants came together after the triumph of the revolution in the Sāzmān-i Mujāhidīn-i Inqilāb-i Islāmī ("The Organization of Mujahidin of the Islamic Revolution"). By 1976, the guerilla organizations, both those of Islamic and those of Marxist inspiration, had effectively been crushed, and it was not until the closing stages of the revolution that they re-emerged, mostly under new leadership.

The immediate antecedents of the Islamic Revolution can be traced to the events of the summer and autumn of 1977, when letters of protest against the repressive policies of the régime began to circulate openly, demanding freedom of expression and the respect of legality. These were reformist rather than revolutionary aims, and it was in conjunction with the person of Āyatullāh Khumainī that the series of events constituting the revolution properly speaking began.

In late October, 1977, Ḥājj Sayyid Muṣṭafā Khumainī, the eldest son of the Imām, a man of great talent and a principal aide of his father, suddenly passed away in Najaf. His death – like that of Sharīʿatī earlier in the year – was widely

[94] See *Taḥavvul Yā Tauṭiʾa*, a pamphlet reprinted in 1356/1977, condemning the change in ideological direction.

[95] See the anonymous biographical notes appended to Ṭālaqānī's *Partuvī az Qurʾān* IV, p. 246.

ascribed to the Shah's security police, and demonstrations condemning what was held to be murder were held in Tehran and elsewhere. A further affront to Āyatullāh Khumainī and to public feeling came on 7 January 1978, when the semi-official daily *Iṭṭilāʿāt* published a scurrilous attack on him, accusing him of treachery and collusion with foreign enemies of Iran. The next day, a furious mass protest took place in Qum; it was suppressed by the security forces with heavy loss of life. This clash was the first link in a chain of popular confrontations with the Shah's régime that, gathering momentum throughout 1978, soon turned into a vast revolutionary movement, demanding the overthrow of the Pahlavī régime and the installation of an Islamic government.

The demonstrations in Qum were followed by a more serious uprising in Tabrīz in February, the intention of which was to commemorate those who had fallen in Qum. The killings that now took place in Tabrīz provided the occasion for demonstrations of mourning forty days later that were held in no fewer than fifty-five cities and towns: the casualties were heaviest in Yazd and Tehran. By June, the Shah found it politic to make conciliatory gestures in the hope of slowing the gathering momentum of revolution, without shrinking at the same time from further bloodshed. In August, popular fury reached a new pitch when 400 people were immolated behind the locked doors of a cinema in Ābādān. A point of no return was reached on September 9 when the Iranian army slaughtered not fewer than 2,000 people at the Maidān-i Zhāla in the south of Tehran, an event that passed into the history of the revolution as Black Friday or Bloody Friday.

Throughout, the proclamations of Āyatullāh Khumainī urging steadfastness in the face of the régime's brutality were reaching Iran in ever-increasing quantity. The Shah therefore decided to press the government of Iraq to expel Khumainī from its territory, on the mistaken assumption that once he was removed from the sacred soil of Najaf, his ability to influence events in Iran would be reduced. After a fruitless attempt to enter Kuwait, and a brief consideration of Algeria and Syria as possible places of refuge, on 6 October 1978, Khumainī flew unexpectedly to Paris. At the town of Neauphle-le-Château, he established a modest but highly efficient command centre for the revolution. From France, communications with Iran were infinitely easier than they had been from Iraq. The Āyatullāh received an endless flow of visitors from Iran itself and from the Iranian exile diaspora, and soon his words and image became a frequent feature of the world media.

Thus ironically, the expulsion of Āyatullāh Khumainī from Iraq soon proved beneficial to the revolution; it also exacerbated popular anger in Iran. Clashes

continued all across Iran throughout October; the oilworkers began a crippling strike; and the first serious signs of strain and discontent within the armed forces became apparent. On 6 November the Shah formed a military government in preparation for Muḥarram, due to begin on 2 December, a month rich in emotive and historical associations, described by Khumainī as "the month of the triumph of blood over the sword".[96] As soon as Muḥarram began, demonstrators wrapped in shrouds unhesitatingly defied the government-imposed curfew. On the ninth day of the month, as many as a million people marched through Tehran to Shāhyād Square – a monument to monarchy that now ironically became a focal point of the revolution and was renamed Maidān-i Āzādī (Freedom Square). The following day, some two million demonstrators, led by Āyatullāh Ṭālaqānī (who had been released from his final imprisonment on 30 October), again converged on the square, and approved by acclamation a seventeen-point charter that called for the abolition of the monarchy and the establishment of an Islamic government under the leadership of Imām Khumainī.

Thereafter the removal of the Shah and the triumph of the Islamic Revolution was only a matter of time. The expedient of the Bakhtiyār government, installed shortly before the Shah fled Iran on 16 January 1979, never had any chances of success; nor was there any real possibility of mounting a military coup, despite the fond hopes of key elements in the United States government. Two weeks after the departure of the Shah, Imām Khumainī ended his fourteen-year exile and returned to a mass welcome in Tehran. On 5 February he appointed the provisional government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, headed by Mahdī Bāzargān, and one week later, after a final burst of savagery, the remnants of the old order finally collapsed. The Islamic Republic was born, in what was arguably the most profound transformation since the first coming of Islam to Iran.

In the revolution of 1978–9, two interrelated features were conspicuous: the vast extent of popular participation in the movement, unparalleled in any other revolutionary upheaval of the 20th century; and its overwhelmingly Islamic nature, in terms of ideology, organization and leadership. Virtually every city and town in Iran was mobilized against the Pahlavī régime as men and women from almost all classes of Iranian society demonstrated their desire for an end to the monarchical system and the foreign hegemony it was seen to represent.

[96] See Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*, p. 242.

Although drawn out for a number of years, earlier instances of revolt and protest, such as the Constitutional Revolution in the first decade of the 20th century and the post-war struggle for the nationalization of the oil industry, had been unable to elicit so broad and profound a popular response.

Those earlier movements had been based on coalitions of Islamically-led and inspired elements with secular and nationalist groups, mingled together in varying proportions; the revolution of 1978–9 was, by contrast, fully Islamic in its substance. The participation of non-religious elements was strictly marginal: at no point did, for example, either the National Front or the Tūda Party play any rôle of importance.[97] Most of the armed insurrectionaries who fought the Iranian army in the final stage of the revolution on 10–11 February 1979 were not, as is sometimes claimed, drawn from the guerilla organizations of the left; they were men based on the mosques and revolutionary committees who, loyal to Imām Khumainī, went on to form the nucleus of the Revolutionary Guards.

The slogans uttered during the mass demonstrations were predominantly Islamic;[98] the weapons of the revolutionaries were – until the very last stage – mass prayer and martyrdom; and it was dates of religious significance, especially the month of Muḥarram, that marked the forward movement of the revolution. Most importantly, it was the mosques that provided the basic organizational unit of the revolution. In Tehran, particularly significant were the Masjid-i Qubā, presided over by Dr Muḥammad Mufattiḥ (assassinated in December 1979), and the Masjid-i Amīr al-Muʾminīn, directed by Āyatullāh Mūsavī-Ardabilī (later chief justice of the Islamic Republic). The activities of these and other mosques were co-ordinated by the Sāzmān-i Rūḥānīyat-i Mubāriz (Organization of Militant ʿUlamā), a group established late in 1976 or early in 1977 at the initiative of Āyatullāh Bihishtī. Based in Tehran, it had branches in key provincial centres, and it played an indispensable rôle in assuring communication and strategic co-ordination across the country.[99]

It has been suggested that the mosque was enabled to seize central stage in this fashion by the Shah's repression of secular political parties hostile to his régime. However, mosques and religious personalities had by no means been exempt from government hostility. Several ʿulamā were killed by the régime in the 1970s, most notably Āyatullāh Muḥammad Riżā Saʿīdī in May 1970 and Āyatullāh Ḥusain Ghaffārī in December 1974, and a large group of them, including many who later became prominent in the Islamic Republic, were

[97] A clear exception to this general rule was Kurdistān, where autonomist elements were foremost among the revolutionary forces.

[98] For a catalogue of slogans of the revolution, see ʿAlī Kamālī, *Inqilāb*, *passim*.

[99] See interview with Āyatullāh Bihishtī in *The Dawn of the Islamic Revolution* (Tehran, n.d.), p. 181.

subjected to repeated arrest and banishment to remote parts of the country. More importantly, the secular forces – whether leftist or liberal-nationalist – completely lacked outstanding personalities able to gain the loyalty of the masses or inspire in them active devotion to an ideological goal; there was nobody on the horizon remotely comparable to Imām Khumainī in his appeal.

Khumainī's towering figure was at all times integral to the course and outcome of the revolution. Physically removed from his countrymen for fourteen years, he nonetheless had an unfailing sense of the revolutionary potential that had surfaced, and was able to mobilize the broad masses of the Iranian people for the attainment of what seemed to many inside the country, even as late as the autumn of 1978, a distant and excessively ambitious goal. His rôle pertained, moreover, not merely to moral inspiration and symbolic leadership; he was also the operational leader of the revolution. Although occasionally receptive to suggestions on details of strategy from persons in Iran, he took all key decisions himself, silencing early on all advocates of compromise with the Shah with his magisterial insistence on the abolition of the monarchy and the foundation of an Islamic government. Without this insistence, and without the Imam's ability to sustain the loyalty and obedience of the Iranian masses, what ended as a triumphant revolution might well have passed into Iranian history as one more confrontation between governmental and oppositional forces, inconclusive in its outcome.

Every revolution generates its own historiography and view of the past, and the Islamic Revolution of Iran has been no exception. It has become customary in Iran to regard the revolution as the culmination of almost a century of ᶜulamā-led struggles against the monarchy,[100] and Khumainī himself made frequent reference to those among the ᶜulamā whom he implicitly regarded as his political and spiritual forebears. Against this emphasis on continuity it may be argued that quietism was the choice of many leading ᶜulamā in the 20th century, and that the demand for an Islamic republic was wholly unprecedented. However, the question of ᶜulamā–state relations had remained acute throughout the period; numerous movements and individuals had pursued political goals inseparable from their vision of Islam; and the unshaken loyalty of the Iranian masses to Islam – to what Jalāl Āl-i Aḥmad once called "the secret government of religion"[101] – had never been empty of insurrectionary potential. Thus it was that at a time of acute cultural, social, political and economic discontent, Imām

[100] For an authoritative statement of this view, see the preamble to the constitution of the Islamic Republic, ratified in December 1979.

[101] Jalal Al-i Ahmad, *Occidentosis*, p. 74.

Khumainī was able to orchestrate a powerful and comprehensive reiteration of the pre-existing themes of martyrdom, religious dissent and the desire for just government. The history of mass politics in Iran had begun with the tobacco boycott of 1891–2, launched in obedience to the fatvā of Mīrzā Ḥasan Shīrāzī; it entered a new and wholly unprecedented era with the revolution led by Imām Khumainī.

CHAPTER 21

POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT, MEDIA AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY IRAN

The 20th century has witnessed a dramatic change in the kind and form of entertainment in Iran. This is particularly true of the period since World War II. Some traditional entertainments have disappeared, others have undergone radical transformation, some are dying. New foreign forms have appeared and become popular. The crucial point, however, is that for the majority of the population, especially those living in towns, their major entertainment is no longer connected with the seasonal festivals such as the spring solstice and the autumn harvest, nor with religious holidays. Entertainment has become more a leisure pastime unrelated to calendar determinants. These changes result from rapid urbanization, increased means of communication, and the overall shifts in the socio-economic and political structure.

Festivals from pre-Islamic times and connected with the seasons, like *Barnishastan-i Kūsa* (the ride of the beardless man), which used to take place on a cold day at the beginning of spring, had already died out by the opening of the century,[1] as had *Mīr-i Naurūzī* (the Prince of the New Year). *ᶜUmarkushān*, a farce played out in town streets from the 16th century onwards, is now forgotten.[2] *Khaima-yi Shab-bāzī*, the puppet theatre, with glove-dolls and mario-

[1] Anjavī claims that the remnants of this festival are still to be found in some Iranian villages; see *Jashn va Ādāba va Muᶜtaqidāt-i Zamistān* I, pp. 78–85, II, pp. 92–115. Anjavī's view is further supported and documented by Muḥammad Mīrshukrāʾī in his article "Kūsagarī" in *Ṣaḥna Muᶜāṣir* published by Anjuman-i Tiātr-i Īrān (Tehran, Isfand 1359).

The observances mentioned by both authors should be considered as exceptions which prove the rule. More information about the entertainments of pre-Islamic origin in 20th-century Iran are to be found in "The Secular Theatre in Iran" by Farrokh Gaffary.

[2] ᶜUmar kushān means "the killing of ᶜUmar." In this ceremony the effigy of ᶜUmar can be made in various sizes and is constructed of easily destructable material. It is carried in a procession by a multitude of people who then assault it and ultimately burn it.

This effigy takes its name from two villains in the early history of the Shīᶜīs, both named ᶜUmar, who were infamous for their treachery against the house of ᶜAlī. (1) ᶜUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, the second caliph, who in the view of the Shīᶜīs prevented ᶜAlī from becoming caliph; in addition, the Iranians do not like ᶜUmar because during his caliphate Iran was conquered by the Arabs. (2) ᶜUmar ibn Saᶜd, who was in charge of the military detachment which surrounded Ḥusain (son of ᶜAlī) at

nettes, is on the wane, although this tradition has been adapted and used by some contemporary playwrights. *Tamāshā*: acrobats and conjurers, snake charmers, monkey tamers, and *Lūṭīs* who performed in the public squares and coffee houses are only now rarely seen. *Pardadārī* is story-chanting with the aid of a huge illustrative painting on a canvas usually measuring 3 × 1½ metres, and held up between poles at both ends. The *pardadār* would point to various episodes as he sang the progression of the story. The paintings could illustrate the tragedy of Karbalā or a tale from the national legends and could be rolled up for ease of transportation. In recent years it has become fashionable for private collectors to buy these paintings. Very few pardadārs now survive.[3]

Naqqālī (story telling) originated long before the Islamic period and played an important rôle in disseminating literature, folktales, legends, and current information. This is also a one-man show encompassing pantomimic gestures and vocal modulations which move the audience to tears and laughter. In the last decade *naqqāl*s have found fewer and fewer candidates to train as apprentices.

They are being replaced by more sophisticated amusements which have come to pervade the cities and towns. Traditional forms such as *Taᶜẓiya* and *Rūḥauẓ̇ī* have not died out, but have moved from their natural urban surroundings to the rural areas where they still persist in a modified, less glamorous form.

Qahvakhāna, the coffee house, has played a very important rôle in the development of entertainment, either as a place for Naqqālī, the improvisatory comedic theatre Rūḥauẓ̇ī, or for feasts following Ramażan fasting days. As Qahvakhāna are usually located along travelled routes and on the outskirts of towns and villages where these functions came into play, they are now generally only bus stops along the highways, where passengers use the facilities and eat.[4]

Karbalā and is therefore held responsible for his death. Although there were two historical ᶜUmars, the distinction between the two has dissolved in the collective memory into one character. The treatment of the effigy of ᶜUmar is similar to that of the effigy of Guy Fawkes, who is ritually incinerated in Britain every year on November 5th. During the 1978–9 revolution, the effigy of ᶜUmar was replaced by those of President Carter and/or the late Shah. See Chelkowski, "Iran: Mourning Becomes Revolution." Sometimes ᶜUmarkushān is performed as a skit for a small audience. According to Gaffary, it could also take a satirico-erotic form, and is performed secretly even today, by and for the women in Āẕarbāījān; see "The Secular Theatre in Iran". See also Chapter 19, p. 724 for the religious significance of the *ᶜumarkushān*.

[3] Originally when such paintings were made, not only on canvas but on glass, they were called *Shamāyil Gardānī* (The Exhibition of Holy Pictures). Their origins may go back to the 16th century. In the 20th century, the technique of painting holy Shīᶜī personalities or national heroes on glass, known as *Pusht-i shīsha* is still done on a limited scale. Now the glass pictures are hung on walls or placed on an easel, instead of being carried about.

[4] *Qahvakhāna* has been an obsolete term for a long time, as *qahva* (coffee) is almost never served in these places. Tea has supplanted it. Tea has been cultivated on a commercial scale in Gīlān since the second half of the 19th century, therefore *chāikhāna* (tea-house) has taken the place of *qahvakhāna*. Until the late 1960s and early 1970s, the *qahvakhāna* served as an atelier for the *Parda* painters who

The new kinds of entertainment which have done much to change Iranian manners are films and, to a lesser extent, the theatre, while radio and television function countrywide; the offspring of the Naqqālī is the transistor radio.

In the larger cities, especially Tehran, night clubs and cabarets have sprung up for the well-to-do. Popular singers, live, or on radio and television and records and cassettes, have become young people's favourites.[5] Singers with amplified voices also provide entertainment at urban weddings. One huge cabaret in Tehran called *Shikūfa(-yi) Nau* not only showed traditional dances and the songs of various parts of the country but featured modern cabaret troupes from all over the world. As in traditional Iranian entertainment all classes of society happily mingled in the audience.[6]

The *Daura* are small groups of friends meeting in each others' houses sequentially, not only to eat, talk politics and business, but also to play cards and backgammon and listen to music and poetry recitations. Daura activities are particularly common in provincial towns.

The *Zūrkhāna* (the traditional gymnasium of pre-Islamic origin) which later became interwoven with Shīʿa rituals and beliefs, in recent years unfortunately became a mere showcase for foreign tourists in the main cities.

Though the Zūrkhāna group-displays and individual competitions provided a breath-taking and visually pleasing spectacle, the main purpose of the Zūrkhāna was as a service to the community, and for individual character building. As A. Reza Arasteh aptly puts it:

> Through regular participation the member (of the zūrkhāna) acquired approved character traits, his religious ties and social values were strengthened, and he saw his purpose in community life more clearly . . . On a broader basis, the zūrkhāna fostered a common aim and feeling of unity among its members. It penetrated social class boundaries and brought together individuals from different backgrounds and professions . . . In spite of their varied backgrounds, the zūrkhāna members disregarded social status in order to

received food, lodging and small monetary remuneration for their artistic creations. These paintings in turn would adorn the walls of the *qahvakhāna* or were used by the *pardadār*s. This kind of painting was dubbed "coffee-house painting" in the 1960s – the *qahvakhāna* still serve as a place of exchanging information and gossip.

A television or a radio set then often replaced the live entertainer. The artist and producers of traditional entertainment now use the *qahvakhāna* as their booking offices.

[5] It is worth noting that some of the famous singers received their vocal training as apprentices to the traditional Rauża-khwān.

[6] *Shikūfa-yi Nau* was famous in the 1960s and 1970s. In the late 1950s *Bihisht-i Tihrān* was the place where the famous singer Māhvash used to appear. Māhvash could serve as a prototype for the popular female singers who also became heroines of popular adulation by all classes of society in the 1960s and 1970s.

Another cabaret of repute was *Ufuq-i ṭalāʾī* which had floor shows produced on three stages.

serve the community more effectively. In time of emergency they defended their own maḥala against outsiders. Moreover, the athletes actively participated in national and local festivals and in religious ceremonies, especially during Muḥarram and Ramażan.[7]

Traditional sports, which were connected with the Zūrkhāna, like wrestling and weightlifting, have now been adapted to contemporary world norms and standards, and geared into international competitions, many Iranians winning international recognition and Olympic medals in them. In Tehran thousands of people attend soccer matches. This sport is popular nationwide, even at the village level. Audience participation is highly emotional, whether during live action or when matches are watched on television or heard on radio.[8]

When at the beginning of the century the majority of the (predominantly illiterate) Iranian population was scattered in villages throughout the country, they had limited means of communication with the urban centres. There were neither roads nor telephones, nor means of transport other than quadrupeds. On the other hand, religious institutions such as a mosque, a *madrasa*, a *Ḥusainiyya*, a *Fāṭimiyya*, or a *khāniqāh* provided centres of local social and political information in addition to their religious functions, moulding the ideas and perceptions of the people.

A change occurred in the 20th century when the press began to have a great impact on the people, mainly in the urban centres. Even in small towns and villages a copy of a newspaper would be read aloud to groups, although it might have been considerably out of date. Since World War II, radio started to gain wider distribution. In the last twenty years there has been a dramatic change in the means of communication: new roads, automobiles, rail and air transport, telephone and telegraph, and finally radio and television have spread over the whole country. To the major media, controlled by the government, were added cassettes, tapes, and photocopies, which were free of government regulation.

Modern media and entertainment have created a major change in the whole life-pattern of society. However, traditional means of communication have not been entirely eliminated, as was demonstrated by the 1978–9 revolution, when

[7] Arasteh, *Man and Society in Iran*, pp. 32–33. See also Battesti and Kazemaini "Le Zour xaneh". The famous heart specialist Professor C.N. Barnard co-authored with Kazemaini a book *The Zour Khaneh – Traditional Persian Gymnasium* (Tehran, 1970).

[8] In the 1960s and 1970s Iran hosted many international sports events, and many sport facilities were built during these two decades. Especially, the huge sports complex on the outskirts of Tehran, on the way to Karaj, must be mentioned. These sports facilities were built for the observances of the 2,500th anniversary of the Persian Empire in 1971. Sportsmen were used by the government for mass youth displays on national holidays and during the international events which took place in Iran. Coaches from East European countries were imported to train the young athletes for these mass demonstrations.

mass mobilization was activated by a crossing of modern with traditional means of communication and ritual. William O. Beeman sums it up aptly in connection with traditional performances:

> Iranian traditional performance forms have been able to survive and retain a degree of vitality because they are important to the lives of the people who support them; not just as a kind of residual "escape valve", but as part of the complex of cultural institutions which provide the meaningful symbolic material helping the public deal with the realities of their own situations in the idealized past, the harshly real present, and the uncertain, variable future.[9]

In recent years playwrights have been most active, and more plays have been written than there were theatres to show them. Audiences were also still lacking and unprepared for drama.[10] The future for dramatic production lies rather in radio and television, which are not only government-controlled means of communication, but are also now the chief forms of entertainment. The Islamic Revolution of 1978–9 brought about major political, social, cultural, and artistic changes, as well as alterations in the recent life-style of the Iranians, particularly in the urban centres. These changes have naturally had a great impact on popular entertainment and the media.

It is impossible to predict the future. However, emphasis may be placed on the fact that the revolution reversed "progressive" trends: the year 1979 was unusually rich and creative, but now many places of entertainment have been eliminated or closed. The new and stringent forms of religious, political, and moral censorship have led Iranians back to their own homes, where banned music or tapes of various kinds, card-playing or other disallowed activities may take place privately among family members or close friends. On the other hand, the street provides the spectacle and the excitement of countless pro-and-counter-revolutionary marches and rallies, to arouse cathartic sentiments among a multitude of spectators, participants and passersby, for whom many other kinds of entertainment have been curtailed.

The following is a description of four major forms of entertainment in 20th-century Iran. Two are traditional, Taᶜziya and Rūḥaużī. Two are western imports, the drama and the film. It is difficult to speculate on what will become of the traditional modalities. After a period of decline, there were attempts recently to preserve the indigenous forms. The above-mentioned traditional forms have had a great impact on the imported modalities, although much more than has been could be derived from them.

[9] Beeman, "A Full Arena", p. 286.

[10] Although audiences were still largely unprepared for dramatic productions in modern form, the thirst for theatrical stimulation was felt among the people.

The progression of this chapter, from Taᶜziya to Rūḥaużī, to drama, to film, is intended to show that the indigenous forms of entertainment have survived, and indicate the impact it has had on imported forms. The vignette on Parvīz Ṣayyād is meant to form a bridge between the past, the present, and the future, shown by means of one family. The treatment of radio and television at the end of the chapter is brief, due to limited available information.

MUḤARRAM OBSERVANCES; RAUŻA-KHWĀNĪ; DASTA-GARDĀNĪ; TAᶜZIYA-KHWĀNĪ

The tragedy of the murder of Ḥusain, his sons and his followers, on the plain of Karbalā in A.D. 680 became the prototype for the only indigenous dramatic form in the world of Islam. During the month of Muḥarram, Ḥusain, the third Imam of the Shīᶜīs and the grandson of the Prophet Muḥammad, was on his way to the Kūfa community, whose leader he was to become. He was ambushed in the desert by the troops of the Umayyad Sunnī Caliph, Yazīd. After refusing to surrender his claim to the Shīᶜī legitimacy, and according to tradition, after a siege of ten days on the blazing sands of Karbalā without water for his family and followers, a battle ended on the day of ᶜĀshūrā in the massacre of all the Shīᶜī men. The women and children were taken captive and brought to Damascus together with Ḥusain's head, which was displayed to the Caliph.

For several hundred years there were pilgrimages to Ḥusain's tomb in Karbalā, followed in the 10th century by parades during the month of Muḥarram stimulated by the Persian Shīᶜī Būyid dynasty.[11] These reproduced the bloody scenes of the death of the martyrs for the benefit of mourning and loudly lamenting crowds. When in the 16th century Shiᶜism became the state religion of Iran under the Safavid kings, these parades became elaborate: the martyrs were represented by men bleeding and with missing limbs, mounted on caparisoned horses or camels. Funerary music accompanied floats graphically representing the scenes of Karbalā, while the bystanders beat their breasts and moaned "O Ḥusain, King of the martyrs".

The processions are known as *dasta*. Until the present time they constitute the major Muḥarram observances. Groups of men and boys rhythmically beat their heads and breasts with their palms or else with swords, knives, or stones. Back-beating with chains is still common. These blood-letting activities are often interspersed with mournful chants initiated by a leader. Others carry elaborate

[11] Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya* XI, pp. 243 and 253.

standards, called *ᶜalams*, which are symbolic of Ḥusain's army, so that the standard-bearers and participants of the parade become the equivalent of Ḥusain's troops, ready for self-sacrifice.

The dramatic modality of the Ḥusain passion is based upon the movement and theatricality of the annual parades and also upon the dramatic accounts of the tragedy written by Ḥusain Vāᶜiẓ Kāshifī in the early years of the 16th century, under the title *Rauẓat al-Shuhadā* ("The Garden of the Martyrs"). In early days the public recitation from that book gave birth to *Rauẓa-khwānī*,[12] but soon this modality began to serve as a framework for professional narrators who improvised creatively upon the suffering and deeds of many Shīᶜī martyrs.

Rauża-khwānī, popularly called *rauẓa*, is participated in by all classes of society and takes place in special black tents erected in the public squares of a town or a village. Performances also take place in mosques, or in the courtyards of private houses, as well as in special buildings known as Ḥusainiyya or Takya. These places are usually well carpeted and decorated with black mourning standards and flags as well as with a variety of weapons reminiscent of the battle at Karbalā. In private houses refreshments are provided by the hosts for the rauża participants.

There could be a whole range of Rauża-khwānī for the general public, either elaborately grandiose, or on a small scale in private for housewives. The main activities of Rauża-khwānī take place in the month of Muḥarram and the following month of Ṣafar, but the performances may take place at any time of the year, especially on Thursday evenings. There may be a rotary arrangement in which Rauża occurs in the same household on a periodic basis, or a group of guild members or neighbours may sponsor performances in their various households.

Rauża usually begins with the singing of panegyric to the Prophet and the saints by a man called *Maddāḥ* (encomiast). It is a combination of recitation and singing in slow cadences. This paves the way for a Rauża-khwānī (also known as Vāᶜiẓ) who is a well-trained preacher who alternates storytelling with songs about Ḥusain and the attendant martyrs. Through the choice of episodes and the modulation of his voice, he is able to excite and manipulate the emotions of the audience and to arouse among the participants a unity of feelings of great intensity, so that they identify with the sufferings of the martyrs, who, in turn, will serve as intercessors for the participants on the day of the Last Judgement.

[12] The recitation and chanting of eulogies for the Shīᶜī martyrs goes back at least to the 10th century A.D.; mourning literature, known as *maqtal*, was mainly written in Arabic. *Rauẓat al-Shuhadā* is a *maqtal* in Persian.

Rapid chanting in a high-pitched voice is interrupted by sobbing and crying. Towards the end of the performance, when the audience has been aroused to intense emotion, weeping, breast-beating and flagellation may occur. The Rauża-khwānī ends with congregational singing of dirges called *nauḥa*. The performances may last for several hours to the end of the day and well into the night, with alternating characters. The Rauża-khwān may be considered a preserver of classical Persian musical forms, singing them alternately with his recitations.

Muḥarram mourning observances, like Rauża-khwānī and Dasta-gardānī, are regarded as manifestations of devotion and piety, but they should not be excluded from the category of entertainment. After many interviews during 1963–6 with informants across the country, it became evident to this writer that people, particularly in small towns and villages, long for the month of Muḥarram and for the time when they might participate in these rituals. Rauża-khwānī recitations also became a medium for the exposition of current local and governmental problems for the benefit of the audience.

Around the middle of the 18th century the fusion of the movement[13] and the costumes of the parades with the text of *The Garden of the Martyrs* produced the *Taᶜziya* plays which, some hundred years later, in 1879, were described by Sir Lewis Pelly in the following words: "If the success of drama is to be measured by the effects which it produces upon the people for whom it is composed, or upon the audience before whom it is presented, no play has ever surpassed the tragedy known in the Muslim world as that of Ḥasan and Ḥusain."[14]

During the presentation of the Taᶜziya passion plays, the identification of the people with the performance is such that present time and place merge imperceptibly with the past, while the martyrdom of Ḥusain leads to breast-beating and tears in an identification with the suffering of the martyrs centuries ago.

In the second half of the 19th century, Taᶜziya not only received support from the royal court of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh but became the centrepiece of entertainment and devotion across the nation. The aristocracy and well-to-do in the towns competed for the best actors and tried to outshine each other in the splendour of their production and the decoration of the areas where the performances were held. This is also the period when many special edifices were built, known as Takya or Ḥusainiyya. The grandeur of those buildings, the forceful production of the plays, and above all the active participation of the spectators in the plays themselves, produced an immense impact on the westerners who either wit-

[13] The first account of ritual observance becoming ritual drama comes from William Francklin, *Observations*, p. 246. [14] Pelly, *The Miracle Play of Hasan and Husain* I, Preface.

nessed or read about this theatrical activity. Suffice it to mention that the Comte Joseph-Arthur de Gobineau, in 1865, Samuel G.W. Benjamin, in 1887, and Matthew Arnold, in 1871, all wrote moving accounts of the Taᶜziya pageants and staging.[15]

The plays were at that time not confined to the mourning months of Muḥarram and Ṣafar, but were performed all the year round. The number of plays not directly related to the martyrdom of Ḥusain and his followers was greatly increased. Dramas about various local saints took the lead in expanding the Taᶜziya repertory. These, however, were linked to the Karbalā tragedy by a device which is known as *gurīz* (digression). Other stories were taken from the Qurʾān and national legends, but even profane stories could be incorporated into the Taᶜziya framework. By this device, the sagas of non-religious heroes were reduced to shallow and unimportant events *vis-à-vis* the supreme Karbalā martyrdom. Moreover, audience participants were enabled in their private gurīz to compare their own personal suffering with the supreme martyrdom of Ḥusain.

Basically, the Taᶜziya performance is "theatre in the round". The action takes place on a central stage and expands onto a track surrounding it, usually utilized for duels and battles. Further expansion of the acting space can be made on auxiliary stages on the periphery to the audience, and even beyond the audience. This principle applies to the open air performances or to those in a Takya under an awning.[16]

The actors are divided into good and bad characters. The protagonists sing their parts and are dressed mainly in green, whereas the villains wear red and recite their lines. In the 19th century, thanks to royal and upper-class patronage, the costumes, although symbolic, were highly elaborate. Twentieth-century troupes could not afford such finery. The villagers make do with whatever wearing apparel is available. Women are always played by veiled men.

It has been a tradition that there are no stage props other than symbolic ones, such as a bucket of water standing for the River Euphrates.

Pivotal to the Taᶜziya drama is the proximity of the audience, enabling the participatory reliving of the Ḥusain legend. The genius of Taᶜziya drama is that it combines immediacy and flexibility with universality. Uniting rural folk art with urban and royal entertainment, it admits no barriers between the archetype

[15] de Gobineau, *Les Religions et les Philosophies dans l'Asie Centrale* (Paris, 1865, 1957); Arnold, "A Persian Passion Play"; Benjamin, *Persia and the Persians*.

[16] The most famous was the *Takya Daulat*, built by the order of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, probably modelled after the Royal Albert Hall in London.

and the every-day man, the wealthy and the poor, the sophisticated and the simple, the spectator and the actor. Each participates with and enriches the other.

At the end of the 19th century, Taᶜziya was on the verge of giving birth to an Iranian secular theatre but, due to the turbulent history of the Constitutional Revolution at the beginning of the 20th century and the fundamental social and political changes in the big towns of Iran, Taᶜziya lost royal and upper-class patronage. Although it managed to stay in urban areas, it was slowly on the move into the countryside. Losing glitter and pomp, it often became a commercial enterprise with acting troupes competing for the most lucrative places in which to perform.

The retreat to the provinces had a constructive effect on Taᶜziya in that it enabled participation of the villagers in the preparations for the drama, and sometimes in the acting of it. The function and the essence of the play itself came to have greater significance for the audience.

In a way, the Iranian village tradition, with its simpler more popular religion, purified and preserved Taᶜziya by slowly stripping away the elaborate pageantry and investing it with an unvitiated intimate interaction between the audience and the actors, based on their common humanity. This simplified form, in turn, also reacted upon the urban acting troupes.

There are two main categories of Taᶜziya performances: those produced and performed by professional actors who largely depend upon acting for a livelihood, and non-professional Muḥarram village performers usually organized by a former regular actor. This second type often confine their activities to the day of ᶜĀshūrā, performing an act of communal piety without great artistic value, thus providing a kind of archetypical framework into which the spectators can pour their own sufferings and hopes. It arouses their deepest emotions and permits them to express them publicly. Such performances seem rather crude, particularly to the outsider. They are responsible in part for the criticism Taᶜziya has received from the progressive elements of society during the last fifty years.[17] The opposition of the *ᶜulamā* to Taᶜziya stems from the theological principle against human representation in art, and from the competition with Rauża-khwānī, which had customarily been organized by the clergy and from which they derived an income.

With the coming to power of the Pahlavī dynasty, Muḥarram observances, and especially Taᶜziya, were forbidden. Taᶜziya was thought to be a backward

[17] See Peter J. Chelkowski, *Taᶜziya: Indigenous Avant-Garde Theatre of Iran.*

religious entity which Riżā Shāh considered an obstacle to modernization. While Muḥammad Riżā Shāh Pahlavī officially disapproved of Taᶜziya, it was nevertheless permitted to take place in the rural areas, the small towns, and even in the suburbs of the cities. In the country, performances were at the discretion of the local authorities. However, officials, or the gendarmerie, were sometimes bribed for permission, or were so sympathetic to Taᶜziya that they provided soldiers to play drums and trumpets or to participate in cavalry charges.

In the mid 1960s, tiring of modernization, the intelligentsia had a nostalgic longing for Taᶜziya, which they no longer regarded as a religious ritual, but as a very important social and cultural tradition. In 1966 Taᶜziya was shown on a modern stage and on television for the first time. Then in the Shīrāz Arts Festival there was a Taᶜziya performance in 1967.[18] In 1976 an International Symposium on Taᶜziya was organized by the Shīrāz Arts Festival. In addition to scholarly deliberations, seven Taᶜziya plays were performed at Ḥusainiyya Mushīr in Shīrāz and in a nearby small village, Kaftarak, where thousands of people from near and far attended the plays. Millions also watched on television. The Empress Farah attended one of the Shīrāz performances. Additionally, as a result of the Symposium, the Institute for Traditional Performance and Ritual was established in Tehran in August 1976.[19] In 1977 several Taᶜziya performances which did not belong to the Muḥarram tradition were staged at the Festival of Popular Traditions in Iṣfahān.

Taᶜziya acting is, in most cases, a familial tradition and occupation. As children the actors play child rôles, as teenagers they may become the performers of the leading rôles such as ᶜAlī Akbar or Qāsim. Those who play the antagonists undergo similar training, but need not be able to sing. Actors do not earn enough in this fashion and must have other occupations as well. Despite the recent interest of the intelligentsia, young people now do not wish to continue in this tradition but prefer more modern occupations. This may occasion the extinction of the Taᶜziya actors. Though recently most of the Taᶜziya activities were village oriented, the majority of the actor-producers live in towns. The months of Muḥarram and Ṣafar are still the most often chosen for Taᶜziya plays, but seasonal agricultural activities, such as rice planting or harvesting take precedence over fixed dates. Taᶜziya plays are still preferred to cinema or television in areas of dense population, like Gīlān and Māzandarān.

[18] Parvīz Ṣayyād organized the "Iranian Collection" (*Majmūᶜa-yi Īrānī*) of traditional entertainment and staged it at Tiātr-i 25 Shahrīvar in Tehran. Parvīz Ṣayyād organized, produced and directed three *Taᶜziya* plays at the Shiraz Festivals. The most interesting was *Taᶜziya Ḥurr*. Later, the critical edition of this *Taᶜziya* was published in Tehran by Festival of Art Series, Tehran 1350/1971.

[19] Proceedings of the Conference are published in Chelkowski, *Taᶜziya: Ritual and Drama in Iran.*

The fascination with Taᶜziya among westerners was revived in the late 1960s and early 1970s when leading theatrical pundits like Peter Brook and J. Grotowski rediscovered Taᶜziya during their quest for Asiatic theatrical modalities. Peter Brook, in his interview with the *Parabola Quarterly* devoted to ritual and drama, said: "I saw in a remote Iranian village one of the strongest things I have ever seen in theatre: a group of four hundred villagers, the entire population of the place, sitting under a tree and passing from roars of laughter to outright sobbing – although they knew perfectly well the end of the story – as they saw Ḥussain in danger of being killed, and then fooling his enemies, and then being martyred. And when he was martyred the theater form became a truth – there was no difference between past and present. An event that was told as a remembered happening in history, thirteen hundred years ago, actually became a reality at that moment. Nobody could draw the line between the different orders of reality. It was an incarnation: at that particular moment he was being martyred again in front of those villagers."[20]

The paradigm of Ḥusain is deeply rooted in all the strata of Persian society. In the recent revolution in Iran these rituals were converted into mass mobilization and the symbols of the paradigm were utilized as the signposts for the Islamic revolution. The Rauża-khwānī served as the main traditional medium to arouse revolutionary fervour by comparing the rulers of Iran with Yazīd's henchmen. The demonstrations of 1978 in the towns of Iran, in which millions participated, were patterned after the Muḥarram parades. The forty-day cycle of mourning observances, known as *Arbaᶜīn*, were utilized as mourning demonstrations for the fallen heroes of the revolution. White shrouds like those worn by the Muḥarram marchers were used by the vanguard of the revolutionaries as a sign of their readiness for sacrifice and death. Even the symbolic colours of green and red, standing for good and evil, were used on the ballot cards in the revolutionary referendum, green standing for the Islamic republic.[21]

IMPROVISATORY COMIC THEATRE

The origin of the improvisatory theatre in Iran is unclear. It shares a common denominator with Naqqālī, Taᶜziya and Khaima-yi Shab-bāzī.[22] This theatrical modality has certain similarities with comic improvisatory theatre in Western

[20] *Parabola* IV:2 (New York, May, 1979) published by the Society for the Study of Myth and Tradition, p. 52. [21] See Chelkowski, "Iran: Mourning Becomes Revolution".

[22] Haery, "Ru-Howzi, the Iranian Improvisatory Theatre" is the latest work on the subject.

Asia, the Indo-Pakistani subcontinent, and even with the Commedia dell'Arte in Italy. One of the reasons for the lack of data about its historical development is precisely the fact that it is improvised. Therefore, we do not possess any written text to trace it backwards in history. One can look for roots of this theatre in the jesters of many princely and royal courts scattered round the country before and during the Islamic period. Persian miniature paintings provide us with a rich body of visual documents depicting acrobats, buffoons and musicians together with their acts, costumes, props, and musical instruments.

The corpus of classical Persian literature attests to the fact that the courtly clowns could say the unspeakable and dared to criticize even the most influential court and government officials. From the time of Shāh ʿAbbās onwards, the principle clowns would join hands with court musicians to produce short comic and satirical skits in pantomime about social mores, against a musical background.[23] This led to the development of a theatrical modality known as *Taqlīd*, literally, "imitation". This comic form later became popular in the coffee houses. In the 19th century, and especially during the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh the comic theatrical productions of the royal court of Tehran became a regular event. Nāṣir al-Din Shāh's favourite clown, Karīm Shīriʾī and his troupe,[24] greatly helped to shape and to popularize this comic theatre, which was commonly known as Rūḥaużī, and which spread into private courtyards in urban settings.[25] Its apogee falls into the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th. The basis of this theatre "in the round" is improvisation on an outline plot of which the proponents are stock characters. The costumes and makeup of the stock characters and their movements are simple yet exaggerated, and are easily recognizable by the audience since they reflect the people's impression of the stage parts. These are the archetypes reflecting all classes of Iranian society. This improvisatory theatre has undergone some cosmetic changes in appearance in the course of its development and locality, and is, therefore, known by different names. However, one name that can encompass all the linguistic and technical variations[26] is Rūḥaużī. Rūḥaużī means theatre or

[23] A miniature painting of an acrobat and a tambourine player by Shaikh ʿAbbāsī, whose patron was Shāh ʿAbbās II, could serve here as a good example; see the reproduction of the miniature, and an article about the painter in *Encyclopaedia Iranica* 1, p. 86.

[24] See *Adabīyāt-i Mashrūṭa, Tiātr-i Karīm Shīriʾī*, preface and annotation by Bāqir Muʿminī (Sipīd: Tehran, spring, 2537).

[25] See Baiżāʾī, *Namāyish dar Īrān*, pp. 176–9. One of the most famous performances of Karīm Shīriʾī was *Baqqāl-bāzī dar ḥuzūr*.

[26] Other names for *Rūḥauzī* are *Takht-i ḥauzī*; *Siyāh-bāzī*; *Namāyish*; *Baqqāl-bāzī*.

performance on the pool. The traditional urban Iranian dwelling is a house built around a courtyard in the middle of which is a water tank (*ḥauẓ*). Its raised edges lend themselves as supports for planks laid across them. In this fashion a stage is erected and the surrounding area becomes the auditorium. A ḥauż also used to be situated in the centre of the coffee-houses. In the first half of the 19th century, Taᶜziya was likewise sometimes performed "on the pool". Though today the pool is almost never used for this purpose the name Rūḥaużī persists, not as an exclusive, but as the most common term by which this improvisatory theatre is known. Today the acting takes place "in the round" on the ground, which is covered with carpets and mats, either in private houses or courtyards and on village commons. Children occupy the proximal circle and important people may be seated on chairs. The action can be extended or contracted in accordance with the requirements of the moment, so that interruptions and resumptions are quite possible. This worries neither the actors nor the audience, as improvisation applies not only to words and deeds but also to time and place.

M. Haeri describes the mechanism of improvisation in the following way: "The interrelationships of Rūḥaużī actors are imperative in their improvisations. Their perceptions of one another are so acute that their actions seem to be dictated by one individual. The success of every actor is wholly dependent upon his becoming one in thought with his fellow actors."[27] Therefore one may say that teamwork is the secret of Rūḥaużī success. The more intimate two actors are, the more elaborate their improvisations become. To be a good actor in Rūḥaużī, one not only has to be able to act and interact, but also to be intuitive and witty enough to improvise new variations on the spur of the moment. The second most important aspect of Rūḥaużī is its relationship to the audience: the wit and artistic abilities of the actors are released by the spontaneous reactions of the audience, which in turn leads to verbal and physical participation. This is an outstanding characteristic of Persian audiences.

One can see certain similarities between Rūḥaużī and Taᶜziya as far as the chemistry of the performers and spectators is concerned. The main difference is that the purpose of Rūḥaużī is to create laughter by all possible means, whereas Taᶜziya provokes tears.

The plots of these plays are based upon everyday life, on fairy-tales and legends, and on stories based on national and religious epics. Although the purpose is mainly humorous, Rūḥaużī is a perfect vehicle for satirizing Iranian

[27] Haery, *op. cit.*

society. Even performances based on legends and religious stories can be exploited to satirize contemporary conditions.[28]

Since the text is not written down, the players are at liberty to mock with impunity local officials, society, social taboos, even the government and religious preachers and authorities. They are, in this fashion, immune to censorship. In recent years, since tape recording has become ubiquitous, a certain degree of caution has become necessary.

The main characters of the Rūḥauẓī plays are: Ḥājjī – a typical bazaar merchant, money-greedy, who uses religion as a shield for his doings. He may have several wives who do not know of the other's existence. This leads to trouble when they discover each other.

Siyāh is a servant known for his black facial make-up (in some provinces he has a white make-up). He is the dominant character who speaks with an uneducated accent and confuses messages he is to deliver, creating a chain of misunderstandings which are thoroughly risible. He is the central character dispensing humour. He distorts not only linguistic and social patterns but also moves in an unco-ordinated fashion. His actions appear to be bad, but in the last analysis lead to good ends. His contorted actions and words make it possible to refer to sexual taboos and gestures, or governmental or political iniquities, provoking good natured cascades of laughter. He also brings characters from classical literature into the every day life of the Rūḥauẓī repertory.

Zan-i Ḥājjī – the main wife of Ḥājjī, a typical middle class scold, pretentious and dissatisfied about money. She mistreats servants and badgers her husband.

Ḥājjī's daughter of marriageable age, she is a nice girl troubled by lack of understanding by her family and by the local customs.

Ḥājjī's son – a despicable selfish young man, whose intentions are obstructed by Siyāh.

The King, the Courtier and Chief of Police, represent authority and are resplendent with decorations on uniforms.

Fukulī (Bow-tie wearer) – a dandy and a person educated in the West. He is a

[28] Stories from classical Persian literature entered the *Rūḥauẓī* repertoire, such as Rustam and Isfandiyār; Bīzhan and Manīzha; Yūsuf and Zulaikhā; Khusrau and Shīrīn; Farhād and Shīrīn; stories which glorify such rulers as Tīmūr and Nādir Shāh. The popular fairy tales contributed to such plots as *Chahār Ṣandūq* or *Hūlārd-i Hind*. Western influence could also be detected in *Rūḥauẓī* by integrating parts of translations of western plays. The typical example of this could be Molière's *Médecin Malgré Lui*. However the most commonly performed plays are those based on everyday life such as *Ḥājjī Masjadī du ẓana*; *Naṣīb va Qismat*; *ʿArūsī-yi Hālū*; *Siyāh-i Rāstgū*; *Ṭabīb-i Ijbārī*; *Dāmād-i Firārī*; *Ḥājjī Bāẓārī va Zanish*; *Mushtī va Nīm Mushtī*; *Ṭabīb-i Kāshī*.

pitiful man who either pretends to be superior to his peers or else is confused about his place in society. He is the butt of Siyāh. Sometimes this man represents a European with absurd and laughter-provoking manners.

There are additional characters for all walks of life.

In the 20th century some of the Rūḥauẓī troupes moved into the newly-established theatres. The placing of Rūḥauẓī in the big city theatres, as in Tehran, was not an easy task; changing from the theatre "in the round" to the proscenium setting somewhat altered the rapport between actors and audience. As Beeman says: " the traditional performing troups outside of the main urban centers of the country had an authenticity in their performance that existing urban troups lacked, particularly those who performed on the proscenium stage".[29]

Female rôles had previously been played by men. In the theatres, women came on stage to the horror of the clerics. Interference by the religious authorities took place to the point of setting fire to theatres. Today the use of women in performances is also common in the country-side. W. Beeman's field research in the years 1976–77 has furnished enough examples to prove the point: "we located four principle troups in Nīshāpūr. All contained excellent performers. Two of the troups used *artistes* in women's roles, and two used men dressed as women – *zan-pūsh*.[30] The use of actual women in performances was an important variable throughout the country. In some areas residents preferred to have women as performers, in other areas, it was not thought proper. For Khurāsān, the division was about half and half."[31] It is since the end of World War II that, under the pressure of modern competitors, Rūḥauẓī has been on the move from its natural urban ambiance to the rural areas. Those few Rūḥauẓī companies which stayed behind are based in town theatres adapting many modes of the day to their repertory.[32]

Today Rūḥauẓī has mainly provided entertainment for wedding and circumcision celebrations. These chiefly take place before the month of mourning, Muḥarram, and the month of fasting, Ramaẓān. The troupe provides theatrical performances, music, occasional shows of jesters, acrobats and jugglers, thus

[29] Beeman, "Through Iran in Search of Ru-hozi", No. 4, p. 13, 20 August 1977.

[30] Female performers are commonly known as *artistes*. Men performing the rôles of women are called *zan-pūsh*.

[31] Beeman, "Through Iran in Search of Ru-hozi", No. 5, p. 10, 21 August 1977.

[32] It does not mean that the improvisatory comic theatre did not exist in the rural areas in one form or another before World War II; the rural comedians probably functioned in the Iranian villages from time immemorial; it is the *Rūḥauẓī* genre which was developed mainly in the towns.

integrating the different parts of the whole affair.[33] In recent years a wedding is usually a one-day happening in the towns. It is in the villages, and especially among the tribes, that it can go on for many days. This provides an opportunity to a Rūḥauẓī troupe to exhaust its repertory, which according to Beeman, can consist of as many as seventy to eighty plot-plays.[34] The pressure of the modern competitors, however, is not limited today to the urban environment. It can be felt even in the most remote corners of Iran. The findings of the field research in the eastern and southern provinces of the country, carried out by a team from the Tehran Institute for Traditional Performance and Ritual in 1976–77, stress this. "It was clear at this point that traditional improvisatory theatre in Iran was alive and still possessing a great deal of attraction for people in rural areas. We began to see signs of erosion in the tradition, however. Some troupes had broken up. Others had reduced their numbers to the point where they could only present musical performances and not theatre. The principle reason for the erosion of the traditional theatre seemed to be the incursion of the urbanized wedding with its emphasis on popular music, formal dress and polite reserved behavior. As this type of celebration gained in popularity, people were beginning to feel that Rūḥauẓī theatre was not modern enough for their celebration."[35]

Nevertheless, according to Beeman, "there may be as many as 250 troupes regularly presenting improvisatory plays throughout the country today".[36]

As in Taᶜziya, actors are recruited mainly from the lower strata of society and carry on a family profession. Also like Taᶜziya actors, they need additional sources of income and play only those rôles for which they are physically suited, progressing according to their age and ability. Actors are rôle-bearers (*dast-pūsh*), so that a man playing Siyāh is called *Siyāh-pūsh* (The Man dressed in Black) but remains his own private person and therefore bears no responsibility for what he says or does on stage. As in Taᶜziya there are minimal stage properties, some of which may be symbolic, as when a pillow represents a bed. Moving to another place is indicated by walking about or by stating the locality of the moment.

[33] It is an old tradition that troupes which present plays are also musical troupes. They provide music for the play's background and music and dance for general entertainment. In the past the musicians were known as *Muṭrib* and *Lūṭī*. Today they do not like these terms and like to be called *Navāzanda*, *Hunarmand* or *Mūzīsyān*. The principal instruments used are *tār*, *kamāncha* and *zarb*. In most cases, the head of the musicians is the head of the entire troupe.

[34] William O. Beeman, "Traditional Improvisatory Theatre – Iran", p. 54. M. Haery believes that this is an exaggerated number. Usually a troupe is known for several plays and in addition can perform a few others.

[35] Beeman, "Through Iran in Search of Ru-hozi".

[36] William O. Beeman, "Traditional Improvisatory Theatre – Iran", p. 56.

Whereas in the old days the coffee houses served as playhouses, today they have become booking offices for Rūḥaużī troupes. In 1977, under the auspices of the Institute for Traditional Performances and Ritual, the International Conference on Rūḥaużī took place at the Shīrāz Festival of Arts. Troupes from Khurāsān, Fārs and Kirmān performed there, to the delight of the ordinary people and the cognoscenti. Hundreds attended nightly.

As early as 1922 Ḥasan Muqaddam wrote a play called "Jaᶜfar Khān is Back from Europe" reminiscent of Fukulī, the dandy in the Rūḥaużī plays.[37] Here the rôles were scripted. In Tehran in the 1960s ᶜAlī Naṣīriyān produced a play called *Siyāh*, based on the black servant of Rūḥaużī. His second scripted "Rūḥaużī play", called *Bungāh-i Tiātral*, was staged in the 1970s. One of the most interesting comedies fashioned after Rūḥaużī was written by Bīzhan Mufīd and called *Jān Niṣār*. This play was first performed in Tehran in 1973, and was directed by the playwright himself to the acclaim of audiences and critics. This play is the best proof that the traditional forms can be successfully adapted to the modern artistic modalities.

In conclusion is should be noted that, from the time of the jesters to the Rūḥaużī characters, humour and laughter have generally been the only outlet for grievances against the harsh and autocratic governments, rulers and fathers. No other defence was available or exempt from punishment. Rigid social codes and mores were also softened by the antics of Siyāh and the other comedians.[38]

DRAMA

Goethe, though a great admirer of Persian literature, noted a peculiar absence of drama in Persian poetry: "Had a dramatic poet made his appearance, the whole literature would have assumed a different appearance."[39] Goethe's view, however, was through the prism of Western dramaturgy: he was looking for the art of producing and writing plays. This form of dramatic art did not yet exist in Iran.

The Persians, however, had another form of drama – an extraordinary performing modality known as Naqqālī. Naqqālī is an ancient art of storytelling which originated in simple minstrel shows and by Safavid times had evolved

[37] Ḥassan Muqaddam, *Jaᶜfār Khān az Firang Āmada*.

[38] The best description of *Rūḥauzī* performance is to be found in Kāẓimīya, *Qiṣṣahā-yi Kūcha-yi Dilbīkhwāh*. See also the works of Beeman.

[39] J.W. Goethe, *Westöstlicher Divan, Noten und Abhandlungen: Nachtrag*. "Höchst merkwürdig ist, das die persische Poesie kein Drama hat. Hätte ein dramatischer Dichter aufstehen konnen, ihre ganze Literatur müsste ein anderes Ansehen gewonnen haben."

into a complex form of entertainment. Naqqālī storytelling was not performed in theatres, but in coffee houses. The story enacted by the Naqqāl (storyteller) is based freely upon the major literary masterpieces, predominantly the *Shāhnāma* of Firdausī. The story is serialized, so that a new segment is told daily. In this fashion it may take a storyteller as long as a year to complete the entire tale. Mary Ellen Page, who conducted field research on storytelling in Iran from 1974–5 writes:

> Each storyteller is associated with a different coffeehouse where men would come daily at specified times to see him perform. A storyteller may perform in two coffeehouses in one day, or two storytellers may perform at different times in the same coffeehouse. The storyteller . . . may split up his year, spending some time in one town and some time in another town. The clientele is primarily composed of regulars who come every day to hear the story. These men form an attachment to the storyteller, to the coffeehouse, and to the time of day.[40]

In conformity with the other performing modalities of Iran, the Naqqāl not only digresses and deviates from the text, but interprets the material in accordance with the situation of the day, making it more relevant and meaningful to the audience. Though not everything is acted out as in real theatre, the Naqqāl can still bring his listeners to laughter and tears by hand and body movements and variable voice pitches and mimicry. A good Naqqāl can fire the imagination of the audience to such an extent that they can see scenes which could not be provided by the best-equipped rotating stage, cleverly costumed actors, or any of the special effects available in modern conventional theatres.

Despite the many efforts to revive Naqqālī at the four festivals of the arts devoted to storytelling at Ṭūs-Mashad from 1975 to 1978, this art is rapidly dying out. As Page reports:

> In major cities, one may still find the traditional storyteller performing daily before a crowd of as many as 100 to 200 men. While the craft is certainly one that has been practised for centuries in Iran, it is now rapidly falling off. In the city of Shīrāz in 1974–1975, there were four full-time storytellers.[41]

The dramatic tradition of Iran owes much to such indigenous performing modalities as Naqqālī and puppetry, but a different dimension is also contributed by uniquely Iranian religious dramas and pageants. Though Taᶜziya has been discussed elsewhere in this chapter at greater length, it deserves mention here for the rôle it has played in the evolution of the secular theatre in Iran.

[40] Page, "Professional Storytelling in Iran", p. 197.
[41] *Op. cit.* p. 196; see Page, *Naqqali and Ferdowsi.*

The evolution of western drama from the cycles of mystery and miracle plays is well known. Less well understood is the parallel development in Iran. By the late 19th century, the mystery play, Taᶜziya, was on the brink of giving birth to a secular Iranian drama. Had this happened, it is unlikely that religious theatre would have disappeared; rather, it would have paralleled the newly emerging secular theatre. However, the successful conversion of religious ritual drama into secular drama was thwarted for two reasons. The intellectual élite considered Taᶜziya to be a backward superstition-ridden ritual, and were far more attracted to western-style theatre.

From the middle of the 19th century onward, the production of western dramas was encouraged. After Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh and his entourage began extensively to visit Europe, a theatre hall was established at the local polytechnic in Tehran. In this early period, the Iranians merely adapted French plays, mostly by Molière. Characters from the French dramas and ambiance were Persianized, and local proverbs and stories were incorporated. The audience consisted chiefly of the members of the court. Perhaps because of religious opposition, this theatre had a short life.[42]

At about the same time as western dramas were being adapted, Persian playwrights began experimenting with writing plays in the western manner. The father of this period of Persian drama was Mīrzā Fatḥ ᶜAlī Ākhūndzāda. Ironically, though his parents were from Iranian Āẕarbāījān, Ākhūndzāda lived in the Russian Caucasus and wrote in Āzarī Turkish. Today, many nations claim him as their own.

His dramas, translated into Persian, served for many years as models for playwrights in Iran.[43] The spoken idiom of Ākhūndzāda's comedies became the mode for literary expression, and the themes of his plays became vehicles for

[42] Dār al-Funūn was founded in 1850, and theatrical production began in 1886 and lasted six years. *Le Misanthrope* was translated into Persian by Mīrzā Ḥabīb Iṣfahānī, and published in 1869–1870 in Istanbul, where he lived. Following the example of the Turkish translators, who gave French characters Turkish cultural characteristics, Iṣfahānī also Persianized the characters and locations in his translation of the same play. Another Molière play staged at the polytechnic was *Le Médicin Malgré Lui* (*Ṭabīb-i Ijbārī*). See also ᶜAlī Naṣīriyān, "Naẓarī bi hunar-i namāyish dar Īrān."

[43] In Russian he is known as Akhundov. His six comedies were translated into Persian by Mīrzā Muḥammad Jaᶜfar Qarājadāghī in 1874, and had a great impact on the development of drama in Iran, and also on its prose. The translator in the introduction to the Persian edition emphasizes both the educational value of the theatre and the importance of the simple colloquial language when he writes: "both the literate and the illiterate, by means of reading and hearing, may benefit from the lessons exemplified in the plays". H. Kamshad, p. 28. French translations appear in M.F.A. Akhundov, *Comédies* (Paris, 1967). For a list of other translations, see Gaffary, F. in L.P. Elwell-Sutton (ed.), *Bibliographical Guide to Iran* (Brighton, 1983). See also F. Ādamiyyat, *Andīshahā-yi Akhūndẕāda*.

social criticism. Ākhūndzāda wrote, in the introduction to his plays, that "The purpose of dramatic art is to improve people's morals, and to give the reader or spectator instruction." Thus, the corruption of judges and officials, the abuse of power, and the superstition and ignorance of the average citizen were severely – and wittily – criticized in his works. This maintains a certain continuity with the skits of the traditional Iranian improvisatory theatre, the Taqlīds.

Ākhūndzāda's influence can be best be seen in the three plays written in Persian by Mīrzā Āqā Tabrīzī, the great pioneer of Persian drama. Though his plays were more suitable for reading than for staging, they nevertheless achieved a great breakthrough in the development of Persian drama, and had a powerful effect on the audience. The plays so cleverly criticized Iranian political institutions, corrupt officials, and the passivity of the people that the author had to conceal his identity. By attributing the plays to Mīrzā Malkum Khān, who was living in exile in Europe at the time, Tabrīzī was protected from the wrath of the Shah and his government.[44]

The first modern dramatist to write in Persian, according to Yarshater, was Mīrzā Aḥmad Maḥmūdī (1875–1931). "Writing in colloquial Persian marks a great break with the tradition of using polite speech in writings."[45] This is especially apparent in Maḥmūdī's play entitled *Ustād Naurūz Pīna-Dūz* ("Master Naurūz the Cobbler"), published in 1919.

Persian drama in the 20th century was by turns stimulated or impeded by social and political conditions. After the Constitutional Revolution of 1906, many of the dramas written resembled political pamphlets rather than dramatic productions.

Riżā Shāh's advancement to the throne did little to enhance the development of the theatre. Patriotic and didactic subject matter pervaded the scene. A good example of this sort of play is *ʿArūsī-yi Ḥusain Āqā* ("Mr Hussain's Wedding"), by ʿAlī Naṣr. In this work the author stresses the need for literacy and education for the advancement of the nation, and the continual fight against ignorance and drug addiction.

Another negative characteristic of this period was the proliferation of second-rate sentimental plays. Discouraged by the unfulfilled expectations of the Constitutional Monarchy, playwrights of this period, like novelists of the time, were escaping into the glory of the past. Many of the patriotic plays were so

[44] In 1908 three plays were published in Tabrīz paper *Ittiḥād*; *Sarguzasht-i Ashraf Khān*; *Ṭarīq-i Ḥukūmat-i Zamān Khān-i Burujirdī* and *Hikāyat-i Karbaʾā Raftan-i Shāh Qulī Mīrzā*. It was only in 1956 that the Soviet Azarbaijani scholars discovered the real author of these plays. See Algar, *Mīrzā Malkum Khān*.

[45] Yarshater, "Development of Persian Drama", p. 30.

sentimental, unsophisticated, and idealistic that they were suitable only for staging by high school students. The best representative of the sentimental-patriotic play, is the play by Mīrzāda ʿIshqī, *Rastākhīz-i Salāṭīn-i Īrān dar Kharābihā-yi Madāʾin* ("The Resurrection of Persian Kings in the Ruins of Ctesiphon").

However, the positive side of Persian drama in this period must not be neglected. Perhaps in reaction to social injustice and political censorship, which was very powerful at the time, playwrights began writing exquisite satires. A comedy, referred to above, by Ḥasan Muqaddam entitled *Jaʿfar Khān az Firang Āmada* ("Jaʿfar Khan is back from Europe") could serve as the best example of an early satire, one so popular that forty years later the same theme, but in a serious tone, was continued in *Gharbzadagī* ("Infatuation with the West"). The butt of jokes in this play is an Iranian who, after a visit to Europe, apes western speech patterns, attire, body motions and manners. Nevertheless, E.G. Browne aptly sums up the state of dramatic art in Iran in 1924 when he concludes: "In short, the drama has not succeeded in establishing itself in Persia."[46]

The abdication of Riżā Shāh in 1941 prompted two developments in Iranian theatre: political and technical. The removal of unremitting censorship enabled many theatrical companies to come into being. Freedom of expression helped the development of drama, theatrical craft, and playwrighting. However, many of the companies started using the theatres for political ends, particularly for the expression of leftist political ideas. One of the outstanding men of the theatre was ʿAbd al-Ḥusain Nūshīn, playwright, director, actor, and producer. He attracted to his theatre in Lālazār street the intelligentsia and members of the middle class.

After World War II this theatre closed, and Nūshīn moved to the Saʿdī Theatre, where he produced modern Persian plays and western classics. In addition to the Saʿdī Theatre, three others should be mentioned: the Firdausī, the Dihqān, and the Bārbad. ʿAlī Naṣr organized a drama school attached to the Dihqān Theatre.

Technical developments in the theatre in this period were also striking, and the greatest innovations were in staging and production. It is significant that the most interesting and original development, the forestage skit, was a byproduct of the traditional Iranian performing arts. This acting in front of the curtain was invented as a "time killer" to amuse the audience during the *entr'acte* while the décor was being changed on stage. Outside Tehran, the short but full theatrical

[46] E.G. Browne, *A Literary History of Persia* IV, p. 464. For *Gharbzadagī* see p. 763 fn. 101 *supra* and Bibliography, Chapter 20, p. 1017; also p. 867 *infra*.

life in Tabrīz must be mentioned, particularly in 1946. Under the Soviet influence, the nationalized theatre, with salaried actors and technicians, thrived.[47]

This period of expansion and experiment was eclipsed somewhat by the return of strict censorship in 1953, and playwrights had to use symbolic language in order to circumvent it. However, this temporary decline was arrested in some measure by Iranian radio dramas when more theatrical plays were broadcast. Yarshater, however, is critical of this development: "The radio plays were mainly romantic, moralizing, or farcical, and they often exhibited weak dramatic construction and unconvincing character development. For dramatic impact, the writers of these plays relied much more on external expressions of human emotion than on internal tensions derived from the unfolding of the action."[48]

Towards the end of the 1950s *Gurūh-i Hunar-i Millī* (National Art Group) helped to re-establish theatre in Iran, by assimilating the best playwrights, stage directors and actors, and by sending the first Persian theatre group to the Théatre des Nations Festival in Paris in 1959. They took to Paris *Bulbul-i Sargashta* ("The Bewildered Nightingale"), written by Naṣīriyān, in which Persian folklore is featured.

In the 1960s Persian drama and theatre came of age. The Department of Fine Arts, subsequently taken over by the Ministry of Arts and Culture, established a school of acting, *Dabīristān-i Hunar-pīshagī*; and a School of Dramatic Arts, *Dānishkada-i Hunarhā-yi drāmātīk*. In 1965 the Fine Arts College of Tehran University established a drama section, *Gurūh-i Namāyishī*. The Ministry of Art and Culture created a theatre bureau, *Idāra-yi Tiātr*, which was to look after the affairs of national theatres, actors, translators, and playwrights.

National Iranian television (NITV) sponsored theatrical programmes as well as a theatrical workshop, *Kārgāh-i Namāyish*, which promoted the production of experimental plays both on television and the stage.

Other factors which contributed to the maturation of Persian drama were the commercial and state-supported theatres which were active at this time, and the establishment of the Shīrāz Arts Festival in 1967, which often had theatre as its central theme. Thus it is not surprising that drama became a potent and appreciable artistic genre in the 1960s. The economic and social changes, the urbanization of society, and the growth of the middle classes all helped drama from the environmental side. As for its dramatic style:

[47] Cook, "The Theater and Ballet Arts of Iran", pp. 411–12.
[48] Yarshater, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

Iran has masterminded one of the major innovations of all Persian writing. Drama has been the forerunner in adapting colloquial speech and its phonetic spelling to literary expression. Original Persian comedy, written as far back as the late twenties, has attempted to portray speaking as they do in daily intercourse. Its influences are everywhere. Phonetic colloquial dialogue is used in fiction as well as in poetry, and has been advanced to the stage where even regional and class distinctions are discernible and are used skillfully in the service of characterization. It seems clear, moreover, that the theater was a natural breeding ground for this development. It is essentially an aural innovation, one that is meant to be heard, and while it can be effective in a text, it is more so on stage.[49]

There are two main schools of playwrighting in Iran. One group, though familiar with western drama, borrows very little of it, mainly the structural setting of plays. This school turns instead to Iranian folklore and traditional entertainment, and reuses the traditional stock characters. ʿAlī Naṣīriyān is the earliest playwright of this school. Before he started to write his own plays, Naṣīriyān produced on stage the adaptations of the two works of the leading Iranian writer, Ṣādiq Hidāyat. Naṣīriyān's *The Golden Serpent* (1957) was inspired by the traditional public square and coffeehouse performance of *ḥuqqa-bāz* (conjuror) and *mār-gīr* (snakecharmer). His *Siyāh* (1960) is the principal character of the traditional improvisatory Iranian comedy, adapted for the modern stage.

Rūḥauzī, discussed earlier, had an impact on many contemporary playwrights. Bīzhan Mufīd seems to have taken more of Rūḥauzī elements into his *Jān Niṣār* play than any other dramatist. The play was first performed in Tehran in 1973 under the direction of the author. In addition to its grotesque stock characters, the play is constructed in such a way that it encourages actors to improvise. Another playwright inspired by Rūḥauzī is Ashūrbanīpāl Bābillā, whose *Tonight is Moonlight* was well-received at the Shīrāz Festival in 1974. Īraj Ṣaghīrī's *Qalandar-khāna*, woven on the canvas of folklore and Taʿziya, was acclaimed in Shīrāz at the following festival in 1975.

The main representative of this traditionally influenced school of drama is Bahrām Baiżāʾī, playwright, film director, theatre historian, and professor of drama. His *Sih Namāyishnāma-yi ʿarūsakī* (Three Puppet Shows) is the best example of this genre. Baiżāʾī not only utilizes Persian folklore but makes use of classical Persian literature and Islam to emphasize the struggles of life and the futility of over-emphasis on man's destiny. The perennial fight between good and evil is represented in this play by the characters Hero and Demon, who are reminiscent of the pre-Islamic and Zoroastrian entities. The trilogy uses the same set of characters throughout, four of whom, Puppeteer, Hero, Girl, and

[49] P. Chelkowski, "The Literary Genres in Modern Iran", p. 361.

Monster are derived from Khaima-yi Shab-bāzī. Girl represents love; and the jester Black Man (*Siyāh*) stands for faithfulness and the sufferings of an outsider's unrequited love. His is a superficial blackness; not the wickedness attributed to a monster, but a skin-deep attribute which makes him socially unacceptable, just as the Girl's blue eyes represent her innocence and desirability to Hero.

The puppeteer, whom one may also consider as another main character, has made these puppets and is responsible for their performance. He depends on them to please the audience and earn him a living. Like all Persian puppeteers, he is also a participant in their dialogue, as though he were one of them. When they try at times to escape from their predetermined actions to develop a life and defiant actions of their own, the puppeteer threatens them with imprisonment in their trunk unless they obey him. He even has the power to destroy them.

In all of these traditionally inspired dramas, the symbolism of light and dark play an important rôle, and all bad things happen at night. Thunderstorms stand for violence, and colours represent different qualities: green is the colour of paradise, red flowers probably represent passion, and blue is the colour of pure love.[50]

Fāl Gūsh, written by a leading Iranian painter and poet, Manūchihr Yaktāʾī, (1922–) belongs to this school. Actually, it belongs in a class by itself, as it fuses traditional and modern elements in a unique way. Yaktāʾī has written an epic poem in the dramatic language of story-telling, thus fusing two traditional modalities, the written (epic poetry), and the spoken (story-telling). Further, the author has employed modern idiom to produce a work to be staged, rather than read or spoken. Its Brechtian qualities of narrative theatre are another facet of its dramatic and theatrical dimension. When it was staged at the Festival of Shīrāz in 1973–4, the actors were professional story-tellers.[51]

This is another example of how the development of drama and theatre in Iran has had an intrinsic relation with the traditional Iranian culture.

The second school of dramatists in Iran base their work to a great extent on western patterns, especially those of the post-World War II playwrights such as

[50] An excellent annotated English translation of the *Three Puppet Shows* appears in Gisele Kapuscinski's Ph.D. dissertation *Persian Theater in the 1960s* (Columbia University, 1982).

[51] *Fāl Gūsh* was published in Tehran in 1970. It contains 2,480 lines. To appreciate the unique qualities of this work, one must have some understanding of Persian storytelling. Traditional storytelling is not merely the recitation of a literary work; rather, the storytellers combine their recitation with a *ṭūmār*, which is an accompanying story outline which provides detailed descriptions of the circumstances in the story, psychological motivations, and other information necessary for the successful interpretation of the story. Normally, the epic poem and the *ṭūmār* are two separate works. The genius of this author was in fusing the poem and the *ṭūmār* into one piece, producing a new dimension in the dramatic tradition.

Beckett and Ionesco. The action is set predominantly in an Iranian environment. The best representative of this group is Ghulām Ḥusain Sāʿidī (b. 1935) who writes under the pen name of Gauhar-i Murād. A doctor of medicine, Sāʿidī practised in the slums of Tehran for a nominal fee. He is also a psychiatrist, writer, and amateur anthropologist, who as an active opponent to the Shah's régime spent some time in prison. His plays are filled with political symbolism and allegory. Yarshater has commented that, "Character delineation and dialogue sequences in Sāʿidī's plays are achieved with a sure hand and a natural sense of dramatic effect, while the tension of the situation is periodically relieved by humorous episodes or remarks."[52]

Sāʿidī's play *Ā-yi bā-kulāh Ā-yi bī-kulāh* (1967), the title of which is difficult to translate, but may be rendered into English as *Long A, Short A*,[53] is a play in two acts which satirizes contemporary Persian behaviour. It takes place in a small square at the intersection of several streets in a middle class neighbourhood. The plot deals with the reaction of the neighbourhood to the fear that a thief is in an uninhabited house. Though there is virtually no action, the conversation between the various participants produces a vivid characterization of an old man who discovers the activity in the empty house; his terrified daughter, a bourgeois know-it-all, who is as much a coward as the rest of the frightened crowd; a charlatan doctor, a mechanic, a helpless policeman, and a reporter who makes himself ridiculous. The entire play is a skit on a certain Persian milieu, showing the members of the neighbourhood in the worst possible light. Suspense pervades both acts, interlarded with mistrust, suspicion, rancour, and the occasional absurd minor activity. An outstanding feature of both acts is the interplay of personalities brought into vivid relief by what people say. They do very little, apparently because there is no one to take the lead and tell them what to do.

Under the smoke screen of symbolism and non-realistic situations, Sāʿidī's ten plays carry on a frontal attack against the establishment. Another theme dear to his heart is the generation gap in Iranian society, and the confrontation between East and West, and between the traditional way of life and the modern westernized lifestyles.

To the same school of drama belongs Ismāʿīl Khalaj, whose *How are you, Mash Raḥīm?* and *Guldūna Khānum* (Shīrāz, 1977) focus on the plight of simple people. Other playwrights who emphasized similar themes are Akbar Rādī, Bahmān Fursī, Parvīz Kārdān, Arsalān Pūryā.

Another major figure in contemporary drama is ʿAbbās Naʿlbandiyān (b.

[52] Yarshater, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

[53] An annotated English translation is given in Kapuscinski, *op. cit.*

1947). He developed his talent while working with the experimental group at a theatrical workshop, *Kārgāh-i Namāyish*.[54] His *Profound, Important, and Modern Research in the Fossils of the 25th Geological Era* won the second prize at the Shīrāz Art Festival in 1968. The title of this play, like the long titles of three of his other works, resemble the lengthy titles common to the Taᶜziya plays and those of the chapters of the Iranian national epic. Despite the use of this and other features of classical Persian literature, particularly Ṣūfī literature, Naᶜlbandiyān's theatrical expression is that of Sartre and the Theatre of the Absurd.

Iranian playwrights were helped enormously by developments in the western theatre in the 1950s and 1960s. At that time, western dramatists were breaking away from the established conventions of time, space and action, and the restrictions of the box-style theatre. These innovations were closer to the traditional Iranian performances and characters, and greatly enhanced the development of drama in Iran. It would have been impossible for them to have developed theatre in the highly structured western conventions in so short a period of time.

Another important aspect of this period of dramatic development in Iran was the rising prominence of women playwrights. The prime representative is Khujasta Kīyā, who wrote and directed *The Testimony of the Martyrdom of Ḥallāj* (Tehran, 1969). One of the most active authors of the modern school is Farīda Farjām (b. 1935), a noted author of children's books who has received numerous national and international prizes for children's literature. Interested in women's affairs in Iran, she made a documentary film, *Islam and Women in Iran* (1981). Her plays, *Tājmāh*, and especially *ᶜArūs* ("The Bride") should be mentioned as plays about women. *ᶜArūs*, a one-act play, takes place in an old house in the poor section of southern Tehran, and concerns the problems encountered by childless women whose husbands take other, usually younger, wives. This play well delineates the psychology of the traditional Iranian working-class family.

Though the developments in Iranian theatre, both of form and content, encouraged the spread of drama in Iran, the revolution put an end to this.[55] After the revolution in 1979, there was a short-lived period of theatrical fervour. A

[54] The main artistic directors and actors of *Kārgāh-i namāyish* were Arby Ovanessian, Īraj Anvar, Shahrū Khiradmand, and later Ismāᶜīl Khalaj. The importance of this theatrical workshop was not only in the development and strengthening of the technique of acting, directing, and staging, but also in attracting greater audiences to the modern Iranian theatre.

[55] Of the major theatres in Tehran, two were The 25th Shahrīvar Hall and Tiātr-i Shahr. Outside Tehran a theatre run by Arhām Ṣadr in Iṣfahān must be mentioned. In the years 1976–8, a Festival of Provincial Theatrical groups took place. In the years 1977–8 five issues of *Theater Quarterly* were published. After the Revolution a magazine devoted to theatre, under the name *Ṣaḥna-yi Muᶜāṣir* appeared.

play by a leftish writer, S. Sulṭānpūr, entitled *ʿAbbās Āqā, the Worker*, was staged. Its author, however, was executed in June 1981, and the schools for dramatic and theatrical arts were closed.

Despites these setbacks, what was accomplished in a short a period of time was a remarkable leap forward in the history of Iranian drama and theatre. Kapuscinski writes:

> The most distinctive quality of the new genre is its uniqueness. On the one hand, although it has roots in age-old customs, it cannot be considered to be descended from an ancient theatrical tradition . . . On the other hand, it owes only its inspiration and some of its dramatic techniques to the folk and religious theaters of post-Islamic Iran, or to Western drama. It must therefore be concluded that this is truly an original art form. Voicing with moving accents criticism and despair about life in contemporary Iran, its intrinsic value stems from the authors' ability to transcend the contemporary local scene and address themselves to universal themes.[56]

Had Goethe lived today, he would have realized that Persian literature has found the missing component, namely, a vibrant dramatic literature.

FILM

One would expect that in contrast to the origin of traditional Iranian entertainment, the origin and early history of film would be fully documented and clear,[57] but this is not the case. There is even a difference of opinion about when the first film in Iran was made and by whom.

According to some sources, the first (now non-existent) film, a documentary of Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh's coronation in 1896, was made by an Anglo-Russian living in Iran and named Rūssīkhān. F. Ghaffārī, however, claims that the first movies were made by the Shah's official photographer, Mīrzā Ibrāhīm Khān, who began film-making in documentary fashion during the Shah's visit to Europe in 1900.[58]

[56] Kapuscinski, *op. cit.*, p. 134.

[57] I am indebted to Mr Bahman Maghsoudlou for making his manuscript under the title *Filmography of Iranian Cinema, 1929–1979*, available to me; this excellent manuscript is now ready for publication.

[58] While in Contrexéville, France, in the summer of 1900, Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh ordered his royal photographer, Mīrzā Ibrāhīm Khān, to buy equipment to make movies in Iran. The newly appointed royal movie maker tried out the newly purchased equipment on 18 August 1900, when he filmed "La Fête des Fleurs" on the Belgian beaches in Ostende. Thus the first Iranian film was made.

As for Rūssīkhān, Gaffary proves his point on the one hand by using the text of Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh's travelogue, and on the other by the correspondence and personal interviews with Rūssīkhān. (Rūssīkhān spent the last years of his life in the Parisian suburb of Saint Cloud, where he died in 1968). Gaffary proves that contrary to wide-spread tradition, Rūssīkhān did not start making films in Iran until 1907. Gaffary, *Le Cinéma en Iran*, pp. 2–5; "Tārīkh-i Sīnamā-yi Īrān"; and "From magic lantern to modern cinema". Farrukh Ghaffārī spells his name Farrokh Gaffary in his western publications.

The traditional entertainments in Iran had been for the most part indigenous productions intrinsically connected with the rhythm of the religious and social life of all the people. They occurred in stated months, in set forms. It is therefore not strange that movies were first shown in private houses on festive occasions such as weddings, circumcisions, and so on, following traditional Iranian practice. The ladies sat separately.

With the establishment of cinemas a complete change took place. Not only was the medium foreign, but it also had no connection with former socio-religious modalities. Moreover, difficulties arose as occasional entertainment became a mere pastime, defying traditional convention.

When the first cinema was opened in 1905 by a certain Ṣaḥḥāf Bāshī, it met with immediate opposition from the clergy.[59] The main difficulty lay in the appearance of women in public, so that for a long time cinemagoers were men, mostly from the upper classes. Later, women were admitted to separate showings; then cinemas were established specially for women. Later, the sexes were separated in the same theatre, and finally, they were mixed after World War II. The attitude concerning the public appearance complicated the recruitment and training of women for film rôles. Initially, these rôles were played by elaborately disguised and/or veiled men. During the phase of silent movies, in order to overcome the difficulty of reading the captions for the greater part of an illiterate audience, men walked about the theatre telling the stories, while women performed this function in the ladies' sessions.[60]

Most of the foreign feature films that entered the country, usually via Russia, were comedies. Indigenous films were chiefly newsreels. None of the early ones have been preserved. Although Hamid Naficy has stated: "From its very beginning, film production fell within the realm of one centralized government, and the Iranian film industry in its infancy was limited to the role of recording royal ceremonies and newsreel footage . . .",[61] it seems that this state of affairs was particularly true with the coming to the throne of Riżā Shāh. Film production consisted mainly of newsreels of such events as Riżā Shāh's coronation, the opening of the railway system, or the establishment of the National Bank of Iran.[62]

However, the royal edict to unveil women helped to increase the size of the

[59] This cinema was declared illicit by Shaikh Fażl-Allāh Nūrī.

[60] Actually, these were inserts rather than captions, which appeared every few minutes giving a summary of the dialogues and events.

[61] Naficy, "Iranian Feature Film: A Brief Critical History", p. 445.

[62] These newsreels were made by a professional film maker, Khān Bābā Muʿtażidī. He should be considered the first man to have entered the Iranian film industry by training, and not by chance. He trained specifically in film making at Gaumont in Paris.

female audience. The development of the film industry in Iran depended upon acquiring technical skill, sophisticated film directing and better acting. It was also a question of educating the public to appreciate artistic and social values foreign to them. Unfortunately, the quality of imported films was inferior. This reacted upon both local production and audience values in a negative way.

The first feature film was produced in 1929–30 by the Mayāk Cinema Company, directed by Avans Ohanian, entitled *Abī va Rābī* (*Abi and Rabi*). This was an imitation of a series of Danish comedies called Patte and Patachon.[63] Ohanian had learned his technique in Russia and had established a workshop for actors in Tehran in the same year to prepare them for film production.

The first Iranian movie with a soundtrack was produced in Bombay in 1931–2. ᶜAbd al-Ḥusain Sipantā (1907–69), an Iranian writer and poet, had been settled for some ten years among the Parsees in Bombay to help with the transliteration into Persian of the works of Zoroastrian scholars.[64] He wrote the script and acted in a film called *Dukhtar-i Lur* ("The Lur Girl") which Ardashīr Īrānī, a Parsee, directed and produced. The story was about a government official, Jaᶜfar, travelling to Khūzistān where he met Gulnār, a captive dancer, in a roadside café. Their love affair was interrupted by an attack of the bandits who had originally kidnapped her from her father. Eventually Gulnār and Jaᶜfar succeeded in procuring the capture of the bandits and restoring peace to the region. The film was a great success in Iran. It was a love story outstanding for its musical, technical and artistic qualities.[65]

A parallel can be drawn at this point with the developments in other contemporaneous Iranian media, such as the press. In the last quarter of the 19th century the newly born press in Iran reflected only the opinions of the royal court and the government. Due to strict censorship and lack of experience, the press remained backward for a long time, while in Turkey, Egypt and India, Iranian expatriates, like Sipantā in Bombay with his films, published excellent Persian newspapers which had an impact on Iran, especially during and after the 1906 revolution. Sipantā remained for a time in India and branched out into films on Iranian historical heroes and literary legends, but these films were not

[63] The stars of these Danish films were Schenström and Madsen. Muᶜtaẓidī was a cameraman in this Ohanian film.

[64] Sipantā left Iran for India in 1306/1928. In Bombay between 1306 and 1315 he translated and authored nine books on topics ranging from the life of Zoroaster to poetry of the 20th-century bard ᶜĀrif; he also tried, however unsuccessfully, to publish two newspapers in Bombay; see Gauhar Tāj Sipantā, pp. 24–9.

[65] *The Lur Girl* was first shown in Tehran in January 1933, and continued to be shown for the next seven months. At that time there were eight cinemas in the Iranian capital, including a luxury one called the Cinema Palace, where the first film with a sound track in English was shown. There were only a few cinemas in the provinces.

well enough produced to be successful.[66] Meanwhile in Iran a silent feature film called *Ḥājjī Āqā Film Star* (1932) was made by Ohanian. In it a traditionally religious father, antagonistic to the film industry, is brought to approve of it by a film made without his knowledge of himself and his way of life. This film illustrates the social mood of the times and the difficulties confronting film makers.

In addition to the shortage of equipment, new governmental taxes created more difficulties and slowed down further production until after World War II. In 1937 Sipantā returned to Iran in the hopes of helping with the development of the Iranian film industry, but the state of Iranian film production discouraged him and he turned to journalism.[67] As has already been said, the low quality of imported films had an impact not only on local imitative production but on the taste of the slowly increasing audiences.

As is evident from Table 1 (see p. 806), not a single feature film was made in Iran during the decade 1937–47, which included the Second World War period. Yet statistics show that some 250 foreign films were exhibited annually throughout the same ten years.

Like the first Persian sound movie, which was produced in India, the first dubbing into Persian was also done outside the country, fifteen years later, in Turkey in 1946.[68] The man responsible for this was Dr Isma'īl Kūshān (1914–81). In Iran he established the Mītrā Film society, which was involved both in dubbing and film production. Subsequently, Mītrā split into two companies of which Pārs Film Studio is still in existence.

His first film, *Ṭūfān-i Zindagī* ("The Tempest of Life"),[69] showed the weakness of the Persian film industry both in technique and plot writing. The public preferred foreign dubbed films, but Dr Kūshān did not give up and in 1949–50 he produced a film called *Sharmsār* ("Ashamed"), the plot of which

[66] To make films on Iranian history and literature which Sipantā undertook would be too ambitious for the most sophisticated film producers of today. The film about Firdausī was intended for the poet's millennium; *Chashmān-i Siyāh* ("The Black Eyes") (1935) was about the reign of Nādir Shāh; the next two films, *Khusrau va Shīrīn* (1934) and *Lailā va Majnūn* (1936) were based on the celebrated romantic and mystical poems by the 12th-century poet Niẓāmī. Several unsuccessful attempts were made in recent years to film these stories so dear to the Iranian spirit: *Lailā va Majnūn* in colour (1956) by Muḥsin Nūrbakhsh and in cinemascope (1970) by Ibrāhīm Zamānī Ashtiyānī; *Shīrīn va Farhad* in colour (1970) by Ismā'īl Kūshān; *Yūsuf va Zulaikha* (1956) by S. Yāsimī and in cinemascope (1968) by Mahdī Raisfīrūz; *Rustam va Suhrab* (1956–7) by Jannatī 'Aṭā'ī and Mahdī Raisfīrūz; *Biẓhan va Manīẓha* (1958) by S. Yāsimī and Ismā'īl Kūshān.

[67] Sipantā, *op. cit.*, pp. 36–42.

[68] The first film dubbed into Persian was a French movie called *Premier Rendez-vous* directed by Henri Decoin.

[69] The importance of this film is mainly historical – it was the first sound feature movie fully produced in Iran. Screenplay written by Niẓām Vafā; directed by Muḥammad 'Alī Daryābigī; producer, I. Kūshān; by Pārs Film Studio. It was first shown in Tehran on 26 April 1948.

became a model for many subsequent productions. In this one, Maryam, a betrothed country girl, is seduced by a young man from the city. Ashamed, she goes to town and becomes a wealthy and famous singer. Her lover finds her, but so does her ex-fiancé, who murders her lover. Years later the pair return to the village together. The producer, in order to make his film profitable, cast a very well-known singer, Dilkash, in the leading rôle. This made the film very popular and lucrative, but unfortunately the banal scenario became a prototype for many films to follow. The success of Dr Kūshān's enterprise induced other Iranians to enter the film business. Many film companies were established hastily, adding to the low quality of the current films, in which dancing and singing were major features.

The plots of these films may be generalized as follows. The scene often originates in a village or tribal community. A girl is either engaged to a man she does not love, or is in love with an inappropriate man disapproved of by her father. She usually escapes to town with her lover and becomes either a dancer or a singer in a café. The lover may or may not have made her pregnant. If he has she may contemplate suicide in the event of desertion by him. Sometimes the man she was betrothed to kills the lover and takes her back to the village. In each case the emphasis is upon the pure life in the rural area, and the corruption of the town.

Revenge is a traditional Iranian theme and greatly utilized by Iranian film makers. Not only does it add to the suspense of the plot, but it wins over the audience who empathize with the passionate settling of accounts, particularly when family honour is at stake. Revenge is carried out mainly by the male members of a family or tribe. Sometimes two men love the same girl and fight over her. Great stress is laid upon masculine strength and dominance, reminiscent of the wrestlers and of Rustam, the traditional superhero. Musclemen abound on the screen.

Excitement is generated by strength rather than sexual overtures. Violence plays a prominent part. (This was also more acceptable to the religious element.) To underscore this point it should be mentioned that one of the greatest money-earners of the Iranian cinema was a wrestling champion, Muḥammad ʿAlī Fardīn, who began to star in 1959. In the 1970s the most popular actor, local or foreign, was Bruce Lee, the "Kung Fu" champion. The *Way of the Dragon*, in which he shines, broke all popularity records.[70] The use of physical strength in the service of the poor, wronged, and oppressed has been a traditional theme in Iranian culture for millennia. At the opposite pole from these redeeming and

[70] Gaffary, "From magic lantern to modern cinema", p. 70. Another film with Bruce Lee, *Enter the Dragon*, was the longest running film in the history of Iranian cinema.

selfless musclemen are the men with the corrupting power of money. One may note, however, that this theme has been greatly overworked by the Iranian film makers.

Women on the other hand are billed as *dukhtar* which can either mean daughter or a girl. Veiled girls are faceless and identified only as the father's possession, to be bartered in marriage. In the films where the veil is dropped a woman becomes a degenerate and a sex symbol in the café. Stress is placed upon the traditional values of women, such as self-sacrifice, purity, and motherhood. Dilkash was the first woman to make the transition to popular acceptance as an actress and singer. Scanning the titles of the Iranian films produced in the last 50 years, it is apparent that more titles contain the word *dukhtar* than any other word. This could be a tradition established by the first successful film with a soundtrack, *Dukhtar-i Lur*, or else the word is used as an eye-catching sex symbol on a billboard. The latter seems more probable.

The second archetype for many films in the later period was *Ganj-i Qārūn* ("The Treasure of Qarun"),[71] produced and directed by Siyāmak Yāsimī with the famous former wrestler Fardīn in the leading rôle. The structure of the screenplay, written by Yāsimī, was influenced by American films of the late 30s and early 40s. A young man prevents a rich man from committing suicide and takes him home and cares for him. At home the mother of the rescuer reveals the identity of the would-be suicide as the young man's own father who had left the family many years before. Drinking and debauchery had finally led him to the suicide attempt. The young man then turns against him until his father repents adequately and wins the son over. Though the structure of the film was foreign, the treatment of the themes was very Iranian. This is especially apparent in the depiction of family relations, the portrayal of the corruptive influence of bad friends, and the treatment of the complex aspects of forgiveness.

The dubbing technique, a blessing immediately after World War II when the first foreign films thus became comprehensible to Iranian audiences, developed into a peculiar tool in the local Persian production because well-trained actors were by-passed in favour of good looking muscle-men, who often were untrained and counted from one to ten while the Persian text was being read by someone else, sometimes by real actors. This procedure did a disservice to the artistic dimension of Persian film. Dubbing was also utilized as a useful means of getting around both the political and moral censorship. Thanks to the dubbing, the dialogue could be easily altered.

Fortunately not all film-makers followed the sterotyped model. The first

[71] This half-colour movie was the biggest box-office draw in the history of the Iranian cinema; in Tehran alone, more than one million viewers saw it.

Cine club "Kānūn-i Millī Fīlm" was established at the end of 1949 and had a significant impact on producers, directors, actors and the audience. It organized the first film festivals in Iran, one for English films in 1950, and another for French films in 1951. Criticism, which had always been a weak point in Iranian tradition, had a constructive impact on the film milieu. Slowly the quality of Iranian films improved.

In 1955 the "Pārs Film Productions" made a film based on a popular Iranian novel, *Amīr Arsalān Nāmdār*, which could be considered the most successful film of the half century. However, soon afterwards, additional government taxes were imposed and caused a setback.

It was not until 1958 that a real breakthrough occurred. Up to that time programming was oriented toward amusement and commercial gain. Farrukh Ghaffārī, educated in France, made a film called *Janūb-i Shahr* ("South End of the City") which was a realistic portrayal of the slum dwellers in southern Tehran. This was the beginning of serious attempts of a sociological kind to show the misery of the life of the underdog in a changing society. This film was censored out of existence. Realizing that the time had not yet come to expose the realities of society, Ghaffārī escaped into *1001 Nights* and used one of those stories as the basis of his next film, produced in 1963 and called *Shab-i Qūzī* ("The Night of the Hunchback").[72]

Three other important films were produced in the 1960s. *Sīyāvash in Persepolis* (1963/1964) by Firaidūn Rahnamā (1930–75), who was also a good poet, so that there is a poetic quality to his film, concerns one of the heroes of Firdausī's *Shāhnāma*. This film was very well received by the critics of the West, but made no headway in Iran.[73] *Khisht va Āyina* (1965) ("Mudbrick and Mirror") was produced and directed by Ibrāhīm Gulistān[74] and *Parastūhā ba Lāna Barmīgardand* (1963) ("The Swallows Return to Their Nests") was written, produced and directed by Majīd Muḥsinī.[75] These films could not, however, break the hold on the market of foreign, particularly American, films. At the

[72] Screenplay by Jalāl Muqaddam; F. Ghaffārī, director and producer. In 1973 Ghaffārī made another film called *Zanburak* ("A Gun on the Move"); this comedy focusses on certain traits of the Iranian character.

[73] This film was awarded the Jean Epstein prize at the Locarno Film Festival in 1966; Rahnamā was probably inspired to make it in 1959 when he was making a short film about the ruins of Persepolis.

[74] Gulistān is one of the most talented Iranian short story writers.

[75] The film stresses both social and patriotic values: after losing a son in a village due to lack of health facilities, a father moves to town. Working very hard, he manages to send his second son to Paris to further his education. After a time when he learns that his son is not doing well and has no intention of returning home, the father sends the son a letter containing a bit of Iranian soil. Touched, the son is moved to finish his studies and return home.

time when Ghaffārī produced his first film in 1958 the first commerical television modelled on American programmes was established in Iran. Television further exposed Iranian audiences to cheap western films.

It is interesting to regard Iran's own cinema from the mid 1950s as a social phenomenon.[76] Differences in local environment must be considered, as between the capital and the provincial towns. In Tehran showings usually began at 10 a.m. and were repeated every two hours until midnight. In Tehran teenage girls going to movies would be accompanied by their brothers or cousins, which did not prevent the Tehran youth from leaving school clandestinely and meeting in the cinemas for their own purposes during the daytime. In the evening shows, men viewers predominated, particularly in the provinces.

Whereas Iranian graphic artists produced some artistically appealing and interesting film posters, unfortunately the majority of the billboard displays were vulgar and offensively revealing of parts of the body.

In the movies nuts and seeds are constantly eaten. Shells litter the floor, instead of the soft drink cans and chocolate wrappers as in the West. Audience involvement is far greater than in western theatres, because spectators identify closely with the actors. In the small provincial towns, if couples or whole families went to the cinema, the women would be veiled, in sharp contrast to the women on the screen, who unrestrainedly exposed their flesh.

Criticism of the film industry appeared in the Press. Already in 1930 the newspaper *Āyanda-yi Īrān* wrote: "Cinema is primarily the best form of entertainment and the most noble invention . . . Unfortunately, in Iran it has not achieved the desired result since it has fallen into the hands of a group of cheats whose only aim is to fill their purses. Cinema provides two useful purposes: the refinement of morals and secondarily, recreation. As far as its ethical value is concerned, the movies in Tehran have achieved the opposite of this aim: censorship only prevents those films from being shown which are considered politically unsound, but as far as morals are concerned, no one pays any attention. Films in the Iranian cinema are predominantly French. They are sexually arousing, concerned with love making, and even excite octogenarians. What about young unmarried men and innocent girls who come to the cinema for the refinement of their morals? . . . In order to remove these obstacles, one remedy suggests itself, namely, that all films should be censored not only for political but also for moral purposes".[77]

[76] In 1950 there were 80 cinemas in Iran, of which 20 were open-air theatres, operating some six months of the year.

[77] *Āyanda-yi Īrān*, 31 Tīr 1309, the article on cinema is entitled "*Māliyāt bar Sīnamā*".

The religious authorities never relaxed opposition to the cinema, particularly in or near the pilgrimage centres like Qum. The greatest tragedy took place during the revolutionary upheaval in Iran in 1978 when a cinema in Ābādān was destroyed by fire while 430 young viewers were trapped inside. The origin of this fire remains a mystery.[78]

This study has so far only dealt with full length feature films. Before entering upon the final successful phase of film production, when Iranian films received international recognition, we should examine the short-length, predominantly documentary films, which paved the way for the "new wave" of Iranian cinematography. The short story is the most vibrant genre of Persian prose, the one in which public issues and art are equally served. Parallel to the success of the short story in modern Persian literature is the success of the short-length film.

The number of Iranian film directors who received international prizes for short films is astonishing. Starting with three films by Gulistān, an accomplished short story writer, we have *A Fire*, awarded a prize at the Venice Festival in 1961; *Wave, Coral, and Rock*, awarded a prize at San Francisco Festival in 1962; *Mārlīk*, awarded the prize of the Pessaro Festival in 1963. In 1963, the famous young poetess, Furūgh Farrukhzād (1935–1967), directed a short film entitled *Khāna Siyāh Ast* ("The House is Black") about a leper colony. The photography of this film and its poetic insight are very moving. Kāmrān Shīrdil directed *The Mirror*, which received an award in Japan, in 1967; his *The Night It Rained* was awarded the Grand Prix at Tehran International Film Festival in 1974. Nāṣir Taqvāʾī received awards for his *Deliverance* at the International Film Festival for Children in Tehran, 1971, and again in 1972 and 1973 in Venice and San Francisco. Bahrām Baiżāʾī received a prize for his *Journey* at the Tehran International Film Festival for Children in 1972. Parvīz Kīmiyāvī received awards for *Oh, Protector of the Gazelle!* in Turkey and at Monte Carlo, and at Monte Carlo and in Switzerland for his film, *'P' Like Pelican.* Amīr Nādirī received the Grand Prix for his short film called *To Wait* at the eleventh International Meeting of the Young Film Directors at Cannes in 1975. Other young directors who achieved international recognition for short length films are: Hazhīr Dāryūsh; Aḥmad Fārūghī; Ṣādiq Misqālī; ʿAbbās Kiyā Rustamī; Hūshang Shaftī; Khusrau Sīnāʾī, Manūchihr Ṭayyāb.

The success of the short film could not have been fully achieved without the help of the Ministry of Art and Culture, of the Iranian National Radio-Television (NIRT) and of the Institute for Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. These institutions sponsored, commissioned, financially

[78] The *Rex* in Ābādān was destroyed on 20 August 1978. Two days earlier a cinema in Mashhad was set on fire and a few days later, similar "accidents" took place in Riżāʾiya and Shīrāz.

supported or equipped the directors and their crews. A full-length documentary film called *The House of God*, produced and directed in 1966 by Abu'l-Qāsim Riżā'ī, about the pilgrimage to Mecca, achieved great success in Iran and other Muslim countries. The 1970s also witnessed a rapid increase in the number of amateur film producers who organized *Sīnamā-yi Āzād* (The Free Cinema) in 1969. They used super-eight movie film. With the assistance of NIRT this group also became active in the provinces. The extent of their talent is evidenced by the number of festival prizes they won.

In the decade 1966–77 the Iranian cinema came of age. The new spirit grew and a new way of film making came into being. Naficy spoke of ". . . a progressive national film movement".[79] This development was the result of the influence of many important factors. Many talented and foreign-trained film directors, camera men, film technicians and other skilled people appeared. Writers, poets and playwrights joined in preparing socially oriented and realistically written screen plays. Suffice it to mention only three of these men: Gh.H. Sā'idī, a playwright; Ṣ. Chūbak, a prose writer; and A. Shāmlū, a poet. The activities of filmmakers and screenwriters coincided with the flowering of film festivals in Iran such as The Tehran International Educational Film Festival, 1963–77; International Children and Young Adults Film Festival, 1966–77; Tehran International Film Festival, 1972–7; Iranian National Film Festival, "SEPAS", 1969–75; Asian Youth Film Festival, 1973–7; Super-8 International Film Festival, 1975–7; Shiraz Arts Festival – Cinema Section, 1967–77.

The participation of Iranian films in international festivals outside Iran must also be mentioned. The drama schools and the film school were expanding and young film lovers and critics could exchange ideas in the film clubs. Money was generously injected into specially formed film companies, sponsored by NIRT and the Institute for the Intellectual Development of Children and Young Adults. Paradoxically, the same institutions which sponsored the new progressive national film movement often banned the films made for political and social reasons. Films which had won prizes at international festivals were shown promptly, but most films were released to the public only after two or three years' delay. The opposite situation occurred when a film produced by NIRT and called *Mughūlhā* ("The Mongols") (1973)[80] was released in spite of the fact that it criticized television as destroying Iranian culture as the Mongols had done.

An outstanding film of the new progressive wave in Iranian cinema was

[79] Naficy, *op. cit.*, p. 452.

[80] *The Mongols* was written, directed, and acted by Parvīz Kīmiyāvī, a graduate of IDHEC, Paris. This fantasy film with powerful social content has been acclaimed by many international film critics.

Qaiṣar (1969), directed by M. Kīmyāʾī, which won the Grand Prix at the Ministry of Arts and Culture Film Festival in 1971.[81] The leading actor was Bihrūz Vuṣūqī, who subsequently became the most famous Iranian cinema actor, winning several other prizes both in Iran and outside the country.[82]

The film called *Gāv* ("Cow") (1969), directed by Dāryūsh Mihrjūʾī was the first Iranian film to win a major international award, at the Venice International Film Festival in 1971. In the same year the film received a special mention at the Chicago Film Festival. The leading actor, Intiẓāmī, won the prize for the best actor at the same festival. The simple plot of the film tells of how a villager, whose only source of sustenance is his cow, acts like the cow after the animal suddenly dies. This scenario, written by Sāʿidī, manages by its progression to encompass the misery and limits of village life.[83] The fact that this film made no money was of no significance since it was subsidized, but it also shows that the Persian general public was unready for such an exposé of village life. It had been produced by the Ministry of Art and Culture but was banned in Iran for political reasons. The director, Mihrjūʾī, smuggled a copy of the film out of the country to the Venice Art Festival. After it had been widely acclaimed, the government felt obliged to show it in Iran.

Another film, also directed by Mihrjūʾī, was called the *Dāyira-yi Mīnā* ("Mina Cycle") (1975).[84] This time the criticism was of the urban environment where a Mafia type organization sells polluted blood to hospitals. The juxtaposition of affluent people who became rich illicitly and the poor contains the seeds of revolution. This film was finally released in 1977, when the Iranian revolution was about to start.

One of the most interesting film directors is Bahrām Baiżāʾī. His background is unusual in that he began his career as an academician doing research in traditional Iranian theatre, which led him to become a playwright and a film director. *Ragbār* ("Downpour") (1972) was his first film; the second was *The Stranger and the Fog* (1974), and the third, *The Crow*, in 1977. Although he is very "Persian" in his theatre plays, in his films he becomes cosmopolitan.[85]

In addition to two well-known screenplays written by Sāʿidī, four films based

[81] In this film, a traditional theme of revenge, received a completely new treatment in the socio-psychological convention and achieved a new dimension in film technique.

[82] B. Vuṣūqī was chosen as the best male actor at the Tehran International Film Festival in 1974 and at the Delhi International Film Festival in 1975.

[83] The screenplay of *Gāv* is based on the short story by Gh. Ḥ. Sāʿidī, called *The Mourners of Bayall.*

[84] The screenplay by Gh. Ḥ. Sāʿidī and D. Mihrjūʾī is based on the novel by Sāʿidī called *Āshghāldūnī*. Producer: Telfilm NIRT. This film received an International Critic's prize at the Berlin Film Festival in 1978.

[85] His last film was finished in 1980 and is called *The Ballade of Tara.*

on contemporary Iranian literature deserve mention. *Dāsh Ākul* (1971)[86] was based on a short story by Ṣādiq Hidāyat. It won the Grand Prix at the Iranian Film Festival, and Honorable Mention at the Tashkent Film Festival. *Tangsīr* (1973) was based on the novel of that name by Ṣ. Chūbak and directed by Kīmyāʾī. *Shauhar-i Āhū Khānum* (1968), "Āhū Khānum's Husband", by ʿAlī Muḥammad Afghānī, was a novel turned into a screenplay and then made into a film under the direction and production of Dāvūd Mullāpūr. Fourth in this series of films derived from contemporary literature was *Prince Ihtijāb*, based on the story written by Hūshang Gulshīrī and directed by Bahman Farmānārā in 1974.

Bahman Maghsoudlou sums up the state of the art of film-making in Iran when he says that the Iranian film has so far failed to achieve "a blend of traditional village life and customs, or the richness of Persian art forms and ways of the past, with a western film medium". Attempts, he says, to combine the Iranian vision of the world with details of Iranian life and manners "have not been completely successful".[87]

In 1976 there were great plans for foreign film-making on Iranian soil. Additionally, Iranians wished to cooperate and co-produce with International film companies, mainly from the U.S.A., France, Britain and Italy. A huge complex of modern film studios was envisaged for the town of Karaj in the vicinity of Tehran, but these ambitious plans for the future failed to materialize because of the financial crisis of that year.

After a production peak in the early 1970s, runaway inflation led to a decline. Many commercial producers were priced out of the market and the owning of cinemas was no longer profitable. As Majid Tehranian observed, "one factor inimical to the prosperity of the film industry was the increase of television as popular entertainment; also price control and the low investment return on cinemas helped to make the industry decline".[88] Very low admission rates had been maintained for years in spite of inflation. In addition to the pressure from producers, cinema owners, international film companies and even the government, the main government security force (SAVAK) insisted upon the maintenance of low prices for reasons of its own.[89]

At the beginning of the 20th century the film became the entertainment for

[86] *Dāsh Ākul*, screenplay and directing: Masʿūd Kīmyāʾī. [87] Maghsoudlou, *op. cit.*

[88] Tehranian, "Socio-economic and Communication Indicators", p. 70.

[89] A percentage of the gross income was distributed according to the following formula: 20% was taken by the municipality; 40% was taken by the cinema owner; 40% by the film owner. If the film was imported and in a foreign language, the film owner was responsible for dubbing as well as distribution.

the upper classes. By the middle of the 1970s as Tehranian expresses it, "The cinema has been increasingly reduced to the rôle of a lower class urban leisure activity" . . . "There had been a heavy concentration in Tehran (some 20%). The number of cities with cinemas increased from 80 to 140 between 1968 and 1975. Iran could claim about eleven cinema seats per 1,000 of population in 1975; this fell, however, below the UNESCO standard of 20 seats."[90]

In 1976 the urban population of Iran was only 46.7% of the total population.[91] Iranian cinema attracted 45 million spectators in Tehran alone in 1975, and 65 million in other cities of Iran. There is no doubt that among the 110 million viewers there was also a percentage of rural inhabitants visiting the towns, but on the whole it appears that the majority of the rural population was excluded from this popular entertainment.

It is rather unfortunate that the movies which were made by the young directors in the late 60s and 70s have not stirred the imagination of the general public, since these films are mostly about the simple and ordinary people, like a film by Suhrāb Shahīd S̱āliṣ *Ṭabīʿat-i Bījān* ("Still Life") (1974) in which he portrayed the life of a railway-crossing keeper in a remote place, who after 30 years of service must retire without any security or care for him; a sad and impressive picture. Or like another film by the same director called *Dar Ghurbat* ("Far from Home") (1975 in Germany). This film deals with the alienation of Asiatic workers from their native populations and culture, in the European cities to which they have migrated for the higher wages which their families need for a better life at home. Shahīd S̱aliṣ is probably the best known director in the West, with many prizes to his credit. He is now living in Berlin making films for German producers. According to Ronald Holloway, "like Chekhov, Suhrāb Shahīd S̱aliṣ is not a social idealist, nor is he interested in penetrating the mysteries of life to offer a ray of hope or understanding. His only weapon against the exploitation of man (which he takes pretty much for granted) is the unveiling of hypocrisy – and the Chaplinesque glee in doing so brings humour and satire, irony and tragicomedy, to play whenever the chance is offered. This distinctly Chekhovian quality in his films makes them both simple and complex: he is a silent observer of life in its truest, most unadulterated light."[92]

It is only fitting that this exciting decade in the Iranian cinema (1966–77) should be closed by reference to Iranian women. In 1977 Marvā Nabīlī's feature film *Khāk-i Sar ba Muhr* ("The Sealed Soil") was proclaimed the "Most Out-

[90] Tehranian, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

[91] Census Reports: *Iran Almanac Book of Facts*, 16th edition, 1977, as cited in Tehranian, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[92] Ronald Holloway, in the cinema leaflet for Shahīd S̱āliṣ's films shown in Minnesota, 1974.

standing Film of the Year" at the London Film Festival, and a year later at the San Remo Film Festival Nabīlī received the "Best New Director Prize" for the same film. Another Iranian woman, Meri Apik, received the "Best Actress" prize for her rôle in *Bunbast* ("The Dead End") at the Moscow International Film Festival. This is the clearest indication that the Iranian cinema had come a long way, from the time women were excluded not only from acting but from the audience as well, to the time they were winning international prizes for film directing and acting. Andrew Sarris, a leading film historian and critic, writes: "Under the adverse conditions within which Iranian film-makers have had to function, it is amazing that an Iranian cinema of any magnitude has come into existence at all. Yet what is even more amazing is the evolution in the past few decades of a genuinely critical and ironic cinema despite the repression of an official censorship."[93]

Hamid Naficy, in a chapter called "Cinema as a Political Instrument" charges that the film industry in Iran was at the service of the Pahlavī régime.[94] This is an exaggerated claim, as is visible from the same chapter, when the author contradicts himself while analysing the themes in Iranian feature films. No doubt, the censorship was sometimes extreme, but the main characteristics of the Iranian cinema were not its subservient rôle to the government, or its use as their tool. Rather, the main characteristic was commercialism. The film-makers were primarily concerned with producing commercially viable films with broad public appeal. In the last decade, the younger Iranian film-makers, who were in most cases educated with government money, started to make films of a political nature, and even fancied themselves as opposition film-makers. Their films, not all of which were released immediately, were made with government money. These films, however, did not have a wide appeal, and were popular only among a selective audience. H. Naficy writes: "Infatuation with the West soon led to the imitation and assimilation of its cultural products. The growth and development of the Iranian film industry serves as prime example . . . ."[95] Film is indeed a western form, but Iranians knew how to adapt it to their culture and enrich it with their artistic abilities, far better than many other peoples of Asia.

Despite the anti-western feeling in post-revolutionary Iran, the cinema remains a major entertainment form for the people. Some cinemas have been closed, and the films the Iranians see are rather selective, old, and third rate. The scissors of the censors are the most active tools in the post-revolutionary Iranian film industry. In addition to the heavy-handed politico-religious censorship, the film-makers in Iran are urged by the government to impose on themselves a

[93] Andrew Sarris, Introduction to Maghsoudlu, *Filmography of Iranian Cinema, 1929–1979*.
[94] Naficy, "Cinema as a Political Instrument". [95] *Ibid.*, p. 265.

"voluntary" self-censorship. The result of this, according to Hazhīr Dāryūsh, is that out of a dozen films produced in Iran in 1981, "only one film seems worthy of short mention".[96] Many of the leading Iranian film-makers have migrated to the West.[97]

Table 1. *Feature films produced in Iran 1929–82*[98]

Year	Number of films	Year	Number of films
1930–1931	1	1962–1963	27
1931–1932	1	1963–1964	31
1932–1933	2	1964–1965	38
1933–1934	1	1965–1966	43
1934–1935	2	1966–1967	53
1935–1936	1	1967–1968	51
1936–1937	1	1968–1969	72
1948–1949	2	1969–1970	49
1949–1950	1	1970–1971	60
1950–1951	1	1971–1972	81
1951–1952	6	1972–1973	91
1952–1953	11	1973–1974	84
1953–1954	20	1974–1975	71
1954–1955	19	1975–1976	67
1955–1956	15	1976–1977	60
1956–1957	13	1977–1978	31
1957–1958	12	1978–1979	21
1958–1959	16	1979–1982*	40
1959–1960	26		
1960–1961	26	TOTAL:	1176
1961–1962	29		

*Out of 40 films made, only 17 were released; 23 were not released for religio-political reasons.

Table 2. *Cinema seating capacity 1974–5*[99]

Cinemas		Seats
Tehran	119	121,000
Isfahan	12	9,565
Shiraz	13	11,546
Ahwaz	8	6,510
Mashhad	12	12,240
Rasht	9	7,346
Others	265	255,593
TOTAL:	438	423,800

[96] Daryoush, "Iran", in *International Film Guide 1982*, p. 184.

[97] The best contemporary film directors are the following: Kāmrān Shīrdil, Parvīz Kīmiyāvī, Suhrāb Shahīd Ṣāliṣ, ʿAbbās Kiyā Rustamī, Bahrām Baiżāʾī, Bahman Farmānārā, Masʿūd Kīmyāʾī, ʿAlī Ḥātimī, Nāṣir Taqvāʾī, Ārbī Āvānisyān, Parvīz Ṣayyād, Amīr Nādirī, Farrukh Ghaffārī.

[98] Maghsoudlou, *op. cit.* Since 1958, a copy of each film produced in Iran is stored in *Fīlmkhānā-yi Millī Īrān* (Iranian Film Archive).

[99] Gaffary, "From magic lantern to modern cinema", p. 67.

THE HUMAN BRIDGE BETWEEN PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Parvīz Ṣayyād

It is very difficult to preserve tradition, be it in the way of life or of entertainment, when the nation is engulfed in "total modernization". Iran is not the only case of accelerated modernization where traditions have been dying rapidly. Modernization need not wipe out traditional *mores* completely, provided that there are institutions or individuals ready to work for their preservation. The harmony of the past and the present in the field of entertainment in Iran is illustrated by Parvīz Ṣayyād and his family.

His grandfather was a Taᶜziya performer as well as a charcoal burner and a fisherman in the northern province of Gīlān. His father, ᶜĪsā, was a poet known by the pen name Maḥbūb ᶜAlī Shāh. He composed epic poetry, acted in Taᶜziya plays, and was a master Naqqāl (story-teller). His mother was also a daughter of a Taᶜziya performer.

Parvīz Ṣayyād was born in Lāhījān in 1937 where his father was engaged in playing the rôle of ᶜAlī Akbar in a Taᶜziya drama. His childhood was spent following his father about, after the death of his mother when he was two years old. In this fashion he was immersed in Taᶜziya, Naqqālī, and gained familiarity with Rūḥauẓī and other traditional entertainment. Parvīz played children's rôles in Taᶜziya before going to high school in Tehran, where he wrote short stories and his first play.

At the age of 22 he received a prize for a play from the Office of Dramatic Art in Tehran (1959). This opened the way to a scholarship at the Institute of International Education in New York in 1962. After a year in America he returned to Iran, entered business college, but continued with his theatrical activities. While in America he had become convinced that the indigenous Iranian theatrical modalities should be maintained, thinking that they could be successfully merged with modern forms.

For the opening of the newly built governmental theatre called *Twenty-fifth Shahrivar* in 1965, he produced and staged *Majmūᶜa-yi Irānī* ("Iranian Collection"). This was a medley of traditional forms of entertainment which was a great success. This collection was also broadcast on radio and shown on television. In 1967 he organized a storytelling festival in Tehran. Afterwards, he produced and staged a series of traditional Iranian performances for television.

To the inauguration of the Shīrāz Arts Festival in 1967 he brought the Taᶜziya play of *Ḥurr* in which professional Taᶜziya actors and musicians from all

over the country participated. For subsequent Shīrāz Festivals he produced two other Taᶜziya plays.

The cross-breeding of the past and modernity could be seen in Ṣayyād's adaptation for the stage of a poem by a well-known Iranian poet and painter, M. Yaktāʾī, called *Fāl Gūsh*.

In 1968 Ṣayyād established a theatrical group which performed on various stages, but mainly in television programmes. They played both classical and modern plays.

In 1975 he succeeded in establishing his own theatre, The Little Theatre of Tehran. Although this venture was not financially profitable, it was a fruitful experience for the actors and the audience in that both contemporary western and Iranian plays were performed. The influence of Taᶜziya and Rūḥaużī and other traditional forms was nevertheless clearly visible.

Between the years 1960 and 1977, Ṣayyād produced or staged, directed, filmed or played a rôle in, or wrote screenplays for some 900 programmes for Iranian television. He is well known among television viewers for the characteristic rôles both of rural and urban heroes which he played.

One of the best examples of the crossbreeding of tradition with modernity is the character of Samad whom Ṣayyād created and developed for many television programmes and nine full-length feature films. Samad, the simple good-hearted peasant patterned after Shulī of the Rūḥaużī tradition, became the beloved hero of Iranian television and cinema audiences in the 1970s. Particularly outstanding were twenty-one feature films for which Ṣayyād either wrote the screenplays, or which he directed or acted in, or produced. He also published three plays and translated several plays into Persian. The *Ḥurr* Taᶜziya play was edited and published by him. He also has articles in Iranian literary journals.

Parvīz Ṣayyād has been in the U.S.A. since the autumn of 1979. At a time when western experimental drama is interested in "total theatre" and the re-investment of western drama with ritual, it is to be hoped that Ṣayyād, who is now at the other end of the spectrum, may re-invigorate western theatrical activity.

MASS MEDIA

Radio

Although foreign-language broadcasts were received by Iranian listeners in Tehran and also in some provincial cities where electricity was available during

the 1930s, it was not until 1939 that short news broadcasts in Persian came to Iran from Turkey's Radio Ankara. Station Tehran Radio was inaugurated in 1940.

Subsequently Tehran Radio began to transmit in French, English, German, Russian, Arabic and Turkish for foreign consumption, while short daily newscasts covered Iran, in addition to a variety of programmes for five hours a day. A news blackout during the final months of Riżā Shāh's reign was finally broken by his son, Muḥammad Riżā Shāh, whose radio address spoke of his oath of accession and appealed to the people for support on 25 August 1941. This established a precedent for the king to address his subjects annually at Naurūz (New Year).

The country at large was introduced to a broadside of propaganda in World War II. Thereafter, the radio network in Iran was in a period of rapid outreach. By 1966 Radio Iran had installed 22 transmitters broadcasting 130 hours every day. Twelve provincial radio stations relayed Tehran Radio Iran's news broadcasts, as well as initiating programmes of local or regional interest, often in appropriate dialects or in Arabic, Turkish, Urdu, or Pashtu. More powerful stations than those originally constructed were subsequently built.[100]

Radio in Iran, always subject to dominant political groups, finally came under the control of the Ministry of Information in 1964, after previous successive takeovers by other governmental agencies. Majid Tehranian says, "During the political turmoils of the early fifties, radio was often used for political mobilization both by the prime minister Mossaddeq and later by the succeeding governments".[101]

In 1971 radio was joined with television in the organization called National Iranian Radio and Television (NIRT).

The most outstanding radio advance occurred with the importation of cheap battery-operated transistor sets. In the old days, the population received information from the government by means of a man, called a *jārchī*, who would travel from one district to another and in a loud voice spread the news; this action was known as *jār zadan*. The people had an entirely oral tradition so that when the transistor radio was imported in huge quantities, it was readily accepted. While illiteracy had been reduced, hearing was still more acceptable than reading.

The programmes were often family oriented, being extensions of the educational programmes of the Development Corps. Religious programmes, plays

[100] See Banani, "The Role of the Mass Media", pp. 326–7. [101] Tehranian, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

and contests were offered, as were very frequent musical events, both ancient and modern. There was much emphasis on child development. The farmers and the army also had special programmes. However, Amin Banani writes: "Aside from music, radio has had a formidable effect upon popular culture, where its impetus has been toward the acceleration of westernization – and more specifically Americanization – of the more superficial aspects of the life style in urban society. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, a significant portion of the entertainment programmes of Radio Iran was made up of translations of American radio detective series and "soap operas". In this area, however, television has already surpassed the radio."[102]

Table 3. *First radio programme composition, 1975*[103]

Programme Composition	Hours per Week	Percentage
A. Basic programmes; family, rural development corps. Iranian cultural programmes	23	13.5%
B. News & News Magazine	31	18.5%
C. Children's programmes	7	4.5%
D. Other programmes; music, plays, contests, games, special reports	103	61%
E. Religious programmes	4	2.5%
TOTAL	168	100.0%

According to Tehranian, "The AM radio network covers almost all of the urban population. The Fifth Development plan (1973–8) provided for a total coverage of the population by the First AM Radio Programme and more than 70% coverage by the Second AM Programme."[104]

In 1975, the second programme delivered 126 hours of broadcasting per week. According to the population census of 1976, 4,365,880 households owned radios, which is the equivalent of 128 radio sets per 1,000.[105]

Television

In 1958 television entered Iran by means of a privately owned commercially-operated monopoly. The first concession of five years was repeated by a second and applied also to the importation of all TV receivers into Iran. There were two

[102] Banani, *op. cit.*, p. 328. [103] Tehranian, *op. cit.*, p. 83. [104] *Ibid.*, p. 76.
[105] Population Census, 1976 in Tehranian, *op. cit.*, p. 80.

stations, in Tehran and Ābādān.[106] Named TVI (Television Iran) this company used American equipment and programmes dubbed into Persian. These were westerns and quiz shows catering for an unsophisticated public.

A separate National Television Network (NITV) was established in 1966, using the French system. These programmes appealed to the more educated population.

TVI was finally nationalized in 1969. There were now two stations serving various countrywide needs. This was a government monopoly employing some 9,000 people by 1979.[107]

Television had fourteen production and transmission centres in the region, covering 70% of the country's population. There were even satellite broadcasts of world events. Colour television was delayed for local technical reasons.[108]

An educational television station was opened in 1973 covering about 75% of the intermediate schools. Programmes on Persian history and literature, foreign languages for primary and secondary schools, science, programmes for new literatures, etc. were broadcast. "Among its most successful programs are series that combine a visual, descriptive, and historical introduction of remote but significant areas in the country; biographical sketches of historical personages; folkloric performances; Persian music; and Western classical music. It presents a view of Iran that includes more of its essential variety and identity."[109]

In 1968 Amin Banani observed that television was a status symbol. "In middle-class homes, the set is usually turned on as soon as guests arrive, and is kept on even during the serving of dinner. Children's addiction to the set is complete; they constitute a large part of the audience of the American Forces Television (AFTV)."[110]

With the spread of television, a traditional form of entertainment, called *Shahr-i firang*, popular for about a century, disappeared almost totally. Children were particularly attracted to this show, which consisted of a portable box

[106] Ābādān station was opened in 1960.

[107] This figure applies both to Radio and Television. In 1971, radio and television merged into National Iranian Radio and Television (NIRT) – an independent government corporation.

[108] "While the technical resources for introducing color television unquestionably existed earlier (the Asian Olympic Games of 1974 were broadcast in color), full color programming was delayed until 1978 in view of the domestic manufacturers' projected ability to fulfil the anticipated demand for color television sets." Tehranian, *op. cit.*, p. 77. Iranian television employs the advanced German-French system.

[109] *Ibid.*, p. 77.

[110] Banani, *op. cit.*, p. 330. AFTV later became the government of Iran station, called International TV with programming predominantly in English.

Table 4. *Television programme composition: first second programmes, 1975*[111]

Programme composition	Hours per week	Percentage
A. Basic programmes: Rural, workers, family, science Iranian cultural, literary and art programmes	15	20
B. News: Sports, news, news magazines	9	12
C. Children's programmes, TV serials	8	10
D. Other programmes: Games, contests, programmes, films, theatre, documentary, sports, music	42.5	56
E. Commercial advertisements	1.5	2
TOTAL	76	100

containing either a stereoscope or a simple roll covered with scenes of foreign landscapes and cities, which the storyteller would turn as he produced an amusing running commentary in a high-pitched voice. The storyteller was usually the owner of the contraption, which he carried on his back from place to place. This was not a purely Iranian convention: other versions existed in neighbouring countries. The Arabic word for it was *sandūq al-dunyā.*

According to statistics, in 1979 some four million households were covered by television transmission though only about 1.7 million people owned their own television set.

In summary one may say that NIRT was the best functioning organization in Iran during the last decade. It was a professional organization of broadcasters trained both at home and abroad, and it operated smoothly under efficient supervision. As Tehranian has said: "It enjoyed some measure of independence from both the government and the security forces."[112] More importantly, NIRT was looked upon by the population as an organization with some integrity, which was, however, lost when the secret police and the authorities began to interfere in the mid 1970s.

Moreover, NIRT, as a national broadcasting monopoly was in later years considered "by the regime as a substitute for real political communication".[113]

In turn, instead of serving as a national cohesive element, pulling together various ethnic and religious minorities and social classes, the NIRT in the end played a divisive rôle: "the TV portrayal of upper- and middle-class standards of living must have augmented the sense of injustice, envy, and outrage felt by the

[111] Tehranian, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

[112] Tehranian, "Iran: Communication, Alienation, Revolution" p. 10.

[113] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

poor and the devout. . . . Entertainment programmes probably had an even more disastrous impact. Both domestic productions and imports imposed the cultural tastes of an urban élite, and their metropolitan preferences, upon a premodern population that inevitably experienced strong feelings of impropriety."[114] On the other hand, one should give credit to NIRT for excellent programmes and serials in which traditional Iranian arts and modes of life were displayed in the most enterprising fashion, even towards the end of the 1970s. The number of art and culture festivals, research institutes and training facilities founded, supported, and associated with NIRT is most impressive. They were:

1 Festival of Arts, Shīrāz/Persepolis;
2 Festival of Arts, Ṭūs/Mashhad;
3 Festival of Popular Tradition, Iṣfahān;
4 Centre for Folklore (Markaz-i Farhang-i Mardum);
5 Centre for the Preservation and Diffusion of Persian Classical Music;
6 Centre for Gathering of Persian Traditional Music;
7 Centre for Musical Training of Children and Young Adults;
8 Performance Workshop (Kārgāh-i Namāyish);
9 Institute for Traditional Performance and Ritual;
10 Centre for the Study of Civilizations;
11 Centre for Film Culture;
12 Centre for "Free Cinema";
13 Iran Communication and Development Institute;
14 Soroush Press;
15 *Tamāshā*, weekly magazine.

These are the best proof of NIRT's genuine commitment to the preservation and propagation of Iranian traditions in the face of modernization; although it is true that some of these centres played a double rôle of preserving and mixing the Iranian traditions with the current Western trends, experiments, and even passing fashions.

To summarize this chapter, the modernization of Iran is well reflected in the media and entertainment of the country. The inevitable consequence of modernization was westernization. This, in turn, was unavoidably associated with urbanization, a strong central government and a definite trend toward secularization. The speed of westernization was such that the traditional network of communication and traditional entertainment lost in the competition with their

[114] Tehranian, "Communication and Revolution in Iran", p. 16.

modern western counterparts. Yet, when it looked as though tradition was about to be completely submerged, it rejuvenated itself and made some of the imported modalities conform with it.

The interaction of the media and entertainment in recent Iran can be subdivided into three parts. One is predominantly verbal, informal and traditional. The second is the state-controlled modern technological network of communication and entertainment and its submission to censorship. The third is modern technology in the service of both of the above categories. Verbal, informal, and traditional media include: mosque, *madrasa*, *Ḥusainiyya*, *Fāṭimiyya*, *takya*, *taʿẓiya*, *rauża-khwānī*, *dasta*, *pardadārī*, *haiʾat-i maẓhabī*, *khāniqāh*, *ẓūrkhāna*, *qahvakhāna*, *rūḥauẓī*, *naqqālī*, *daura*, *aṣnāf*, and *khaima-yi shab-bāẓī*. State-controlled media include: radio, television, and the press. Technology in the service of both the above categories includes: printing, duplication (xerox), cassettes and small recordings, telephone, film, theatre, and sports.

The first two categories are self-explanatory. The third, however, shows the plasticity of the social system's capacity to join traditional modes with modernity. For example, tape recording machines and cassettes were used to great effect in preparing the way for the 1979 revolution. The recorded voice of Āyatullāh Khumainī, or other leaders, had almost the same impact as if it had been delivered from a mosque or in a Ḥusainiyya. Duplicating machines were used in order to spread revolutionary leaflets. The telephone had the same function in that messages and sermons were dialled from the outside into Iran, or from one Iranian location to another. These means of communication were not interdicted as they would have been in the authoritarian countries of Eastern Europe.

As to the film industry, some films shown in Iran emphasized the traditional modalities whereas, *per contra*, others stressed alien values and morals. This applies also to modern drama and theatre.

In the post-revolutionary period, the traditional network and the state-controlled mass communications were in a sense fused. This is not necessarily to the advantage of the country, in that the politico-religious values now control the whole state, including the media, communications and entertainment whether modern or traditional. The noted exceptions would be daura and khāniqāh in the traditional category, and printing, duplication, cassettes, and telephone in the mass communications category. However, the government suppression of the use of these media by the forces of dissent is now greater than ever before.

CHAPTER 22

PRINTING, THE PRESS AND LITERATURE IN MODERN IRAN

In the Preface to the first volume of his *Tārīkh-i Jarā᾽id va Majallāt-i Īrān* ("History of the Press and Periodicals in Iran") Muḥammad Ṣadr Hāshimī considers the proliferation of newspapers and periodicals in Iran during the Constitutional period to be the principal cause of the dearth of book and monograph publication by scholars and creative writers in the four decades that followed. The lack of such publications, which has certainly not been noticeable since the 1960s so far as non-fiction is concerned, and is amply compensated for in post-revolution Iran, was, he says, unprecedented in times before the advent of the newspaper and periodical. In support of his argument he cites one literary scholar, Vaḥīd Dastgirdī, who, as any student of Persian literature knows, devoted his life to its study, but produced not a single book. He preferred to confine himself to articles in *Armaghān* ("The Keepsake"), the literary journal he edited for twenty-two years. Hence, according to Ṣadr Hāshimī, the need to turn to newspapers, weeklies and more infrequent periodicals, in order to read the speculations and conclusions of researchers, as well as writers' expression of their genius. How ephemeral many of these repositories of Iranian literary output in the first forty years of the 20th century were, was proved when their historian and cataloguer began his work. He discovered that of some no trace could be found. There were instances when, after a lapse of several years, not even former editors and publishers could remember anything about their defunct enterprises.

News, *akhbār*, and happenings, *vaqāyi*ᶜ, in the month of Muḥarram A.H. 1253 (April to May 1837) in the "Abode of the Caliphate, Tehran" are given in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* v (1839), pp. 355–71, in the transcription and translation of the first issue of what is considered the first Persian newspaper to be published in Iran. This transcription and translation are, in the absence of any survival of the original, a memorial to the lithographed paper produced in the reign of Muḥammad Shāh Qājār (1834–48) by Mīrzā Ṣāliḥ Shīrāzī, one of the first group of Iranian students to be sent to Europe when ᶜAbbās Mīrzā

despatched them to England for technical and professional training. Ṣāliḥ Shīrāzī used his spare time to learn about printing; as will be seen below, he returned with a press. The first issue of his paper came out in May 1837. Other issues appeared monthly, but only for a year or two. The precise date of their cessation is not known, but by the time the Russian Berezin,[1] was in Iran between 1842 and 1843, the paper was no more. Berezin found Mīrzā Ṣāliḥ occupied as a controller of *barāt*s, bills of payment on state revenues issued by the government to its creditors. He was serving a Shah who gave little encouragement to literature or cultural advancement. Hence the demise of Mīrzā Ṣāliḥ's newspaper, and, after it had produced a Qur'ān with a Persian translation between the lines, a commentary on the Qur'ān and a *Taʿziya-nāma* (a book of the Passion of the Martyr Ḥusain), also the closure of his printing press. Owing to the paucity of information he was able to gather about this paper, Ṣadr Hāshimī refused it recognition as the inauguration of an Iranian Press, which he dates instead to Mīrzā Taqī Khān, the Amīr-i Kabīr's *Vaqāyiʿ-i Ittifāqīya* ("Current Events") in the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh (1848–96).

The article in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* describes the manner in which the earlier paper appeared, lacking a title but adorned with the Lion and Sun Emblem of Iran. It consisted of two large folios lithographed on one side only, and "closely written in a plain hand". The anonymous contributor of the article explains that the example was "given as a specimen of the political advancement of the Persians, among whom a printing press is of but very recent introduction". Ādamīyat comments on the lack of a title. He takes it as evidence that Mīrzā Ṣāliḥ might have been unaware of pioneering papers already published in other Muslim lands, the *Vaqāyiʿ Miṣrīya* published in 1828 in the Egypt of Muḥammad ʿAli (1805–48), and the first Turkish newspaper, the *Taqvīm-i Vaqāyiʿ* ("Calendar of Events"), which began in 1832. The comment indicates the supposition that Mīrzā Ṣāliḥ Shīrāzī bypassed developments in the Ottoman Empire and derived his inspiration directly from his English experience, narrated in his *Safar-nāma* ("Travelogue"); in his Prospectus for the newspaper, the Mīrzā referred to a *kāghaẕ-i akhbār*, literally "newspaper". In this context the word, anciently in use for annals of events, *rūznāma*, "daily record", did not come into use until later.

The Mīrzā's *Kāghaẕ-i akhbār* opened with news of "Eastern Realms", beginning with events in Tehran. There is a lengthy description of the visit to Tehran

[1] Cited by Farīdūn Ādamīyat, *Amīr-i Kabīr*, p. 363.

of the Imam, Muḥammad Mahdī, of Iṣfahān and his reception by the Shah, whom the Imam spoke of as protector of the Sharīʿa, but urged to be ready to sacrifice all in support of the "army of Islam". News is given of tax remissions and the suppression of rebels. News of western countries, besides speaking of the sumptuous entertainment given by the British envoy on the occasion of his sovereign's birthday, quotes in detail a letter from New York describing the launching of a new paddle steamer. It would complete the voyage to London in twelve days rather than a month, much to the relief of "merchants and persons connected with commerce". Coupled with this information from the New World, the *Yankī Dunyā*, is news of a steam man-o-war's arrival in Bombay and its having stopped for bunkering at the Cape of Good Hope, situated at "the end of the Maghrib", the "West", that is to say, of Africa: the geography was not quite accurate. Also reported is the fact that Mīrzā ʿAlī Shīrāzī had at last been paid two hundred tūmāns, then equalling one hundred pounds, for "translating the New Testament with Henry Martyn" twenty-five years before. News from Constantinople is extensive.

It is clear that, in addition to liberal propaganda for the throne, for a venerated religious dignitary and for the throne's amicable and respectful relations with him, Mīrzā Ṣāliḥ Shīrāzī's aim was to introduce readers to the outside world, its geography and especially the West's new inventions, such as the steamship. Indeed, in the Prospectus he had published four months before his first issue came out, he stated the need for Iranians to be informed of world events as well as of the projection of new industries in Iran itself, for example, a paper factory, a sugar refinery, a gunpowder works, and of "the encouragement of artisans".[2] Before proceeding further, however, it is necessary to explain why in 1837–9, according to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, the printing press was still of "but very recent introduction" in Iran.

What was meant was printing in the Persian language, in the Arabic script. Armenians in Julfa had brought printing for books in Armenian to Iran in 1641 when an Armenian *Lives of the Fathers* was printed in Julfa by a certain Vardapet Katchatur. A Service Book appeared two years later and examples of both books are extant.[3] Moreover, this printing enterprise was with metal type, *chāp-i surbī*, not *chāp-i sangī*, lithography which, as will be seen, held the field for Persian books during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Tavernier reports that the Armenian press at Julfā was soon broken up because the printer could

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 364; Anon., "Tārīkh-i rūznāma-nigārī".
[3] John Carswell, *New Julfa*, pp. 10–11 and pls 90, 91.

not find good ink and "many persons [were] undone by it, who got their living by writing".[4] Carswell comments that Julfā was important for manuscript-copying in the seventeenth century, but in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the printing of Armenian books was resumed there.

As for printing in Persian, Chardin says that in his time at Iṣfahān the desire for printing was marked, as was realization of the need for it, yet nobody had set up a press. The "Grand Maître", whom, interestingly, Dihkhudā suggests might have been the chief Mujtahid (*Lughat-nāma*, under *chāp*), commissioned Chardin to import a press in 1676, the king having liked Arabic and Persian printed texts Chardin had presented to him from Europe; but when it came to assessing the cost the business was dropped. Langlès in a note to this part of Chardin's narrative points out that the Carmelite Fathers had earlier established an Arabic–Persian press, as had the Armenians theirs for Armenian;[5] the Carmelite Iṣfahān convent had been founded by 1611. Langlès disagrees with the notion that the failures of these early presses had anything to do with the dryness of the climate in Iṣfahān affecting the ink. Langlès observes how printing, begun in Constantinople in 1727, was halted there in 1732 by people who were hostile to any form of enlightenment. Thus he was apparently of the opinion that bigotry similarly played a part in the failure to promote printing in Safavid Iran. Armenian and Carmelite auspices would not, of course, do it much good in a climate so fanatical that the works of Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī were only handled with tongs and those of Ḥāfiẓ considered the vehicle of *kufr*, unbelief; but the conclusion must be that the bigotry accorded well with the attitude of calligraphers, who saw their livelihoods jeopardized.

A press was brought from Europe to Tabrīz by Zain al-ʿĀbidīn Tabrīzī in 1817. Under the aegis of the Prince-Governor of Āẕarbāījān, ʿAbbās Mīrzā, a small printing house was opened. Then in 1819–20 Mīrzā Ṣāliḥ Shīrāzī returned from England with a press which also began operating in Tabrīz.[6] In 1824–5 Zain al-ʿĀbidīn was summoned to Tehran, where he opened a press under the patronage of one of the most influential courtiers, Manūchihr Khān, later called the Muʿtamad al-Daula. Shortly afterwards, in 1826, a history of the Qājārs, the *Maʾāẕir-i Sulṭānīya* by ʿAbd al-Razzāq ibn Najaf Qulī "Dunbulī", was printed in typography (moveable type) in Tabrīz. At the end of this work, which remains an excellent specimen of the art of typography, Dunbulī lists the benefits of the governorship of his patron, ʿAbbās Mīrzā, in Tabrīz, among them the importa-

[4] J.B. Tavernier, *The Six Voyages*, p. 229. [5] *Voyages* IV, pp. 89–90.

[6] See Denis Wright, p. 81 and elsewhere for information about the first Iranian students sent to England.

tion of European technology. He mentions foundries, surveying, artillery and ordnance works, but also, "from all the wondrous processes, the operation of printing", by which his Qājār history was produced by ʿAbbās Mīrzā's operatives under the supervision of "a master, the reverend Mullā Muḥammad Bāqir Tabrīzī, one of the notables of this province". The religious title of the man responsible is significant, and the combination of the religious with the commercial classes in the production of modern Persian letters became a commonplace. Also evident from the extended colophon cited here, is the zest with which under ʿAbbās Mīrzā the educated of Tabrīz, and those shrewd enough to encourage them, received European arts and techniques. It was not, however, until the next reign, that of Muḥammad Shāh, had ended and Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's begun, that a fresh attempt was made at importing western ideas and technology. After ʿAbbās Mīrzā's death in 1833, *chāp-i surbī* stopped in Tabrīz, as it did in Tehran after 1845.

Even in 1826, while typographical printing was respectable, lithographed works were also being produced. In lithography, the skill of the calligrapher still had scope to display itself, and it gained the upper hand. A certain Jaʿfar Khān of Tabrīz was sent to Moscow to learn lithography. He brought a lithograph press to Tabrīz in 1824 while, with encouragement from Mīrzā Ṣāliḥ Shīrāzī and at his own considerable expense, a certain Mīrzā Asad-Allāh of Shīrāz was sent for the same purpose to Saint Petersburg. He returned to establish a press in Tabrīz that survived until at least 1912, in partnership with the merchant family of Mashhadī Asad Āqā *Bāsmachī* ("the printer").[7]

It is noteworthy that one of the first fruits of the fashion for lithography was a Qurʾān in the hand of "the celebrated calligrapher", Mīrzā Ḥusain. Other works included mathematical and astronomical compendia, almanacs, histories of Peter the Great, Charles XII and Alexander the Great (translated on the orders of ʿAbbās Mīrzā); a geography of the world; a dictionary derived from the *Burhān-i Qāṭiʿ*, a most important lexicon of Persian; the complete works of Saʿdī, the *Shāhnāma* of Firdausī, and other works of classical Persian literature. Tarbīyat, translated by Browne, expresses surprise at how rapidly typographical printing gave way to lithographic. He says the former did not again become current until after Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh's enthronement in 1896. The chronology is significant. It coincides with events leading to the Constitutional Movement of 1905–6, from which, as has been seen, Ṣadr Hāshimī dated the flood of local and quasi-national journals.

7 Browne, *Press and poetry*, p. 8.

The cultural geography of the Persian tongue does not stop at the Iranian borders. Ādamīyat avers that "the first Persian newspaper" was in fact published in India by Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833),[8] whose services to Persian letters included an edition of the *Dīvān* of Ḥāfiẓ. No trace of the paper remains although it is known that at least one issue was sent to Iran. A Mīrzā Muḥammad ʿAlī Shīrāzī published another Persian newspaper called *Iḥsān al-Akhbar va Tuḥfat al-Akhyār* ("The Best of News and the Gift of Blessings"). Issues reached Iran from Calcutta in July 1851. It was so anti-British that Colonel Sheil wrote to Lord Palmerston suggesting that, while he was ignorant of the Press regulations in India, he would be happy if this paper's distribution in Iran could be prevented.[9] Another Persian journal, *Rāst Guftār* ("Straight Speaking") was begun in 1267/1850–1 by a Parsi nationalist named Narojji, and a weekly, *Chāpuk* ("The Rapid"), had appeared in Bombay in 1846, while Browne discusses evidence for Persian-language papers produced in India several years before the Amīr-i Kabīr's news-sheet in Iran, in the entry for *Jām-i Jamshīd* ("Jamshid's Cup") in *Press and Poetry* (p. 68).

No doubt some if not all of these publications were known to the Amīr-i Kabīr. From the outset of his ministry to Nāsīr al-Dīn Shāh at the beginning of the latter's reign, in 1848–9, he had shown appreciation of the foreign Press as a means of informing Iran of world affairs. He soon established a department for the translation of selected items from foreign journals, which he read himself and passed on to the Shah. Included were papers from India and Istanbul. An Englishman named Edward Burgess and ʿAbd-Allāh Tarjuma-navīs, ʿAbdullāh "the Translation-writer", were the officials responsible for this bureau.

They were also engaged on the *Vaqāyiʿ-i Ittifāqīya* newspaper, of which the first weekly number appeared in early February 1851. It was called the *Rūznāma-yi Akhbār-i Dār al-Khalīfa-yi Tihrān*, "The Journal of Events of the Abode of the Ruler, Tehran"; the name was changed in the second issue. It remained the *Vaqāyiʿ-i Ittifāqīya* until 1860–1. Then it became the *Rūznāma-yi Daulat-i ʿAlīya-yi Īrān*, "The Journal of the Exalted State of Iran", and began to carry illustrations, portraits of eminent people. Later its title was shortened to simply "Government Gazette", and then "The Iran Journal", a title retained into the twentieth century.

These name changes might be said in some wise to parallel language changes that mark stages in the development of a country subject to shifts in outlook and expectations. The wording of the earlier titles match a situation when Arabic

[8] *Op. cit.*, p. 362. [9] *Loc. cit.*

words and inflections were still the norm. With the wording, *Rūznāma-yi Irān*, the Arabic element disappears. More rigorous experiments in rejecting Arabic in favour of Persian words and derivations, of which Aḥmad Kasravī (1890–1946) was a notable exponent, are not in question at this stage, but the beginnings of a tendency that was to become marked in the time of Riżā Shāh (1925–1941) are evident. Since the 1979 revolution the tendency in favour of Persian words has been somewhat reversed. Nevertheless, as will be seen, a distinctive feature of the task of modern Iranian writers has been the shaping of styles suitable for new purposes and a fresh ethos, which included a nationalist consciousness and the need to assert Iran's position as an independent world entity.

Increased contacts with foreign Powers in the early 19th century set the process in train. Officials in the Qājār bureaucracy, notably Mīrzā Abu'l-Qāsim, the Qā'im-Maqām (1779–1835), son of Mīrzā ʿIsā of Farāhān, the Mīrzā Buzurg, began to adjust the idiom of diplomatic correspondence to meet fresh requirements. Readers of Abu'l-Qāsim's prose do not find it by any means clear of the flourishes of an older convention, nor is it characterized by any manifest attempt to avoid Arabic vocabulary.[10] But what Qā'im-Maqām did achieve was a natural, fluent style. It exemplified an escape from the entirely artificial and is seen at its best in the letter to the Tsar of Russia apologizing for the murder of the Russian envoy Griboedov in Tehran in 1829.[11] In effecting this revolution in Persian prose the Qā'im-Maqām showed himself possessed of instinctive literary genius rather than just being another well schooled imitator of the conventions of *inshā'*, the art of (official) composition. No doubt recollections of the idiom of Farāhān, whence his family came, also played their part, as is clear in his private correspondence.[12]

Mīrzā Taqī Khān, the Amīr-i Kabīr, was Qa'im-Maqām's protégé. The Amīr's lithographed newspaper adopted the straightforward style which accorded with the aim repeatedly declared in early issues, that it was not to be restricted to a readership comprising government officials, although these were under compulsion to purchase and read it, but also intended for the general public. Conditions of its sale, emphatically for the provinces as well as the capital, were carefully advertised. *Tarbiyat*, edification, of the people was as

[10] See the lithographed edition of his poetry and prose edited by Farhād Mīrzā (Tabrīz, 1865–6) and second edition edited by Vaḥīd Dastgirdī; B. Qā'im-Maqāmī, *Qā'im-Maqām dar jahān-i adab va siyāsat* ("Qā'im-Maqām in the world of letters and politics") (Tehran, 1320/1942); also Kamshad, p. 13.

[11] Browne, *Literary History* IV, pp. 312–14 where the letter is transcribed.

[12] Ādamīyat, p. 19, n. 1; cf. Dihkhudā, *Lughatnāma*, *s.v.* "Qā'im-Maqām" for a detailed analysis of his style.

constant a refrain in its statements of purpose as was its value for broadening men's horizons. Minds had to be opened to the world beyond Iran. The Amīr-i Kabīr's remarkably forward-reaching outlook can be authenticated from these pronouncements.

A former Iranian consul in Baghdad, Ḥājjī Mīrzā Jabbār, was the editor. His assistants were the two officials from the translation bureau who have already been mentioned. Of them, Burgess, whose brother Charles was also active in Iran, had apparently arrived there on a business venture promoted by a Persian Armenian known as Ṣādiq Beg, a merchant and associate of ʿAbbās Mīrzā. He engaged Burgess in 1826–7. Burgess rapidly learnt Persian and became a translator in ʿAbbās Mīrzā's Tabrīz, but he seems to have continued in trade with his brother until he went bankrupt. The Amīr-i Kabīr, while no doubt anxious not to lose Edward Burgess's skills as a linguist, was at the same time generous in keeping a man whose bankruptcy in Muḥammad Shāh's time had not lacked elements of scandal sufficient to provoke correspondence between Ḥājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī, the prime minister, and Britain, when Anglo-Persian relations were strained.[13]

The desire on the part of men like Amīr-i Kabīr to cater for general "edification", in order that Iranians of the new age might manage increased contact with and pressure from foreigners, meant that the presence of certain foreigners was considered an advantage. Mīrzā Taqī Khān had himself visited the Russian and, at Erzerum, sojourned in the Ottoman Empire, where he had known European officers on the Turco-Iranian Frontier Commission which culminated in the Treaty of Erzerum in 1846, and on which he was the Iranian representative. Robert Curzon testifies to the good impression Mīrzā Taqī Khān gave.[14] On his visit to Russia he had similarly impressed Nicholas I, who remembered him when they met again in Erivan. These experiences made the Amīr value aliens who could be useful, but whose presence aroused xenophobia when there was reaction against ambition to reform. Such a reaction, against the Amīr's wish to see Iran emulate what he regarded as superior western efficiency, contributed to his downfall. Lady Sheil reported how this first *vazīr* to Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh "had improved and increased the army, the finances were thriving, and economy was the order of the day, to the great increase of his own personal enemies".[15] He had, however, reduced the twenty-one year-old monarch, whom he had accompanied from Tabrīz to Tehran on his accession in 1848, "to a cipher". He treated him as a schoolboy, it was said, but was married to his sister.

[13] See Wright, p. 86 and fn.
[14] Robert Curzon, *Armenia*, pp. 55–6.
[15] Lady Sheil, pp. 249–53.

She stood by him when he was dismissed in 1851. He in the end refused an offer of asylum under British auspices,[16] was kept under house-arrest at Kāshān and eventually murdered in January 1852.

One of the declared aims of his newspaper was that it should explain and verify the actions of the government in such a way that rumours and unfounded assumptions might be obviated. In this context the word *gāzit* was introduced from the European "gazette". The fact that from 1860 the paper gained the adornment of illustrations was an innovation, due to the artistic talent of one of the officials engaged on it, Ḥasan Khān, the Ṣanīʿ al-Mulk and Naqqāsh-Bāshī, Artist in Ordinary.[17]

The Dār al-Funūn, Polytechnic, was another monument to the Amīr-i Kabīr's hopes. This college was established in the same year as the newspaper, 1851, and the two were closely linked. The State Printing Press was in the Dār al-Funūn, in the curriculum of which pride of place went to modern science and foreign languages, the latter with a view to building a trained cadre of diplomats. European professors were enrolled. European works of literature and history were translated, and officers from France, Austria, Italy and Germany compiled military and mathematical manuals as well as scientific text-books and Persian–French phrase-books. Teachers in the Political Science department supervised the production of Persian versions of Greek and Roman history, and studies of economics and political systems. Rịżā Qulī Khān Hidāyat's supplement to Mīrkhwānd's history, the *Rauẓat al-Ṣafā*, and his (not always reliable) anthologizing history of Persian poetry, the *Majmaʿ al-Fuṣaḥā*, were prepared under the Dār al-Funūn's aegis. The "brief summary" given in Browne's *Press and Poetry of Modern Persia* (pp. 157–66), listing publications of the Dār al-Funūn, gives a hundred and sixty-odd titles. Several are still valuable for the study of Persian literature, history and biography. They recall the fact that the Dār al-Funūn was the predecessor of the first University, to be inaugurated in 1934 in Tehran.

Obviously such an institution fundamentally influenced the minds and styles of expression of the well-to-do young men fortunate enough to be enrolled there. Through it, French became the second tongue of the educated, a position it has lost since the Second World War. Yet, in spite of the Amīr-i Kabīr's hope that his newspaper would enlighten all, including tribal *khān*s, its scope, as also enrolment in the Dār al-Funūn, were inevitably restricted. Neither could reach beyond a relatively small section of the population; how few they were, in relation to a vastly expanded population, was dramatically evinced when other

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 250. [17] Browne, *Press and poetry*, pp. 10–11 and n. 2.

elements of the Iranian people were brought into action during the 1979 revolution. It then became clear how comparatively small the Europeanized educated element still was, a fact that can be traced back to origins in the Dār al-Funūn and its membership. At the same time the Dār al-Funūn brought a new type of Iranian into existence and changed the course of the development of the country's cultural surface. Moreover, although much more recently imported attitudes and expectations have obscured this, the Dār al-Funūn produced a cosmopolitan outlook in older scholars and writers, influenced by the examples of European institutions and including radically new criteria by which the Iranian could reassess his own cultural assets at the same time as he satisfied his curiosity about those of other nations.

An American mission was sent among the Nestorian Christians in northwestern Iran in 1834.[18] Anglicans were exploring the situation in the early 1840s. E.G. Browne dates the flooding of the tide of missionary activity in the Nestorian area round Urmīya to about 1856. The American and British were followed by French Catholic and Russian Orthodox missionaries, "all of whom . . . founded numerous religious institutions, such as colleges, hospitals, and printing presses . . . The Americans in particular have for long possessed an important printing press for the publication of English, Syrian and Persian works".[19] Certainly the gradual penetration of Christian missions in the second half of the 19th century cannot be ignored in the context of increased Iranian contact with the outlook of other cultures and language-groups; but any appreciable impact of mission schools and colleges so far as Iranian intellectuals were concerned was a later phenomenon. It was related to more centrally situated cities like Tehran and Iṣfahān, but also Tabrīz and Kirmān, and to the 1920s and 30s, the time of Riżā Shāh and, ironically, the eve of his nationalization of foreign missions' schools, which were partly nurseries for the new *Weltanschauung* he favoured.

Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, the Iʿtimād al-Salṭana, as Minister for Publications began a lithographed, but later typographed, paper called *Īrān* in 1288/1871. To this single-worded title were added two significant sub-titles, *Millatī*, "National", and *ʿIlmī*, "Scientific". Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān's own career illustrates the extent to which, since the Amīr-i Kabīr's time, newspaper production, besides its close association with the Dār al-Funūn, had become a concern of the Court. A graduate of the Dār al-Funūn versed in foreign languages, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān, whose own diaries are now in print,[20] was the Shah's translator and

[18] John Joseph, p. 44. [19] *Press and poetry*, p. 8, n. 2.

[20] *Rūznāma-yi khāṭirāt-i Iʿtimād al-Salṭana*, ed. Īraj Afshār (Tehran, 1345/1965–6).

abstract-compiler of foreign news, to be read to the Shah while he lunched. These services gained him several titles until he was made Iʿtimād al-Salṭana, "Pillar of the Sultanate", in 1881. The citation acknowledged that to the stewardship of this royal translator and head of "the whole of Iran's printing establishment" was due the fruitful progress of the imperial printing enterprise.

This enterprise had not ceased to produce voluminous works on history and geography. They belauded on their title pages the era of Nāṣir al-Dīn and remain monuments to the eagerness and industry of the time. In the *Nāma-yi Dānishvarān* ("Record of the Learned"), they include a work of encyclopaedic proportions, and demonstrate a consciousness of Iran's own cultural splendours.[21] Many of these efforts were in the Iʿtimād al-Salṭana's name, but both Browne and Riżā-zāda Shafaq[22] make it plain that he probably wrote little of them himself, while the editor of his diary gives a report that he was ignorant of Arabic and Persian literature, but had read much of them in French translations after being in France in the early 1850s.[23] Less highly-placed scholars acted as amanuenses and compilers, which does not detract from the credit attaching to this phase of literary effort.

It becomes clear, however, that once the Amīr-i Kabīr had established the Press and Dār al-Funūn, and been put to death the next year, the Shah and subsequent advisers had been shrewd enough to ensure that credit for the new means of enlightenment was associated with the throne. Meanwhile men of education and intelligence were furnished with an innocuous but praiseworthy means of employment. Ṣadr Hāshimī indicates how the *Īrān* office was staffed. Under Ḥasan Khān, whose title was then Ṣanīʿ al-Daula, and who was Court Secretary, were Muḥammad Ḥusain *Adīb* ("the Cultured"), also known as *Furūghī*, "the Enlightened", who was the paper's proof reader; Mīrzā ʿAlī Muḥammad, the office manager; Mīrzā Abuʾl-Qāsim, clerk; Mīrzā ʿAbd al-Raḥīm, writer; Mīrzā ʿAbbās, illustrator and in charge of printing; and Mīrzā Āqā Sayyid Valī, compositor of European and Persian types. There were other writers and contributors permanently on the books, and the print-shop workers, eight messengers, a Mīrzā Muḥammad Riżā, translator from French, and Mīrzā ʿAlī Khān, translator from French and English, and Colonel Mīrzā ʿĪsā Khān, another French translator, and the Christian, Mariūs Khān, who translated from French and Russian. Several of these men doubled on the staff of the paper *Mirrīkh* ("Mars") and had been on another, the *ʿIlmī*. Interesting is the number of Sayyids, by definition men of religious associations and respected as such,

[21] Browne, *Literary History* IV, especially pp. 453–8.

[22] *Tārīkh-i Adabīyāt-i Īrān* (Tehran, 1321/1941–2), pp. 397–400.

[23] *Rūznāma*, p. 6 (shish).

involved in practically all earlier newspaper ventures, in the capital or the provinces. It appears that occupations were found in journalism and book compilation for men who might otherwise have had nothing to fall back on but being active members of the religious classes. The step from the clerical to the clerkly sphere was not a wide one; but in this instance those who took it became the progenitors, metaphorically and literally, of a new class of literati and scholars. Their descendants, as the reference above to Muḥammad Ḥusain Furūghī recalls, lived until recent times and continued to contribute to letters, often to a celebrated degree.

As has been observed, reading the *Ittifāqīya* was obligatory for government officials. In issue 51 of this weekly,[24] on 23 January 1852, thirteen or so days after the Amīr-i Kabīr's death, a notice from issue 42 was repeated to affirm that the paper should be regarded as the official vehicle of government orders. Government agents, governors, officials, superintendents, khans, eminent persons in cities, districts and provinces must, therefore, purchase and peruse it. Merchants, traders and communal representatives might take the paper voluntarily. The names of those who did would be registered for receipt of it. Failure to comply with this notice would be visited on the heads of Governors, who were to be responsible for the paper's distribution and the collection of its "*abonnement*" at the end of each year.

In May 1867 Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh gave the Minister of Finance, Mustaufī al-Mamālik, instructions about subscribers' registration for "the four newspapers", termed *rūznamajāt-i daulatī*, "government newspapers", and published by the government. A separate *dastkhaṭṭ*, rescript, laid down regulations. The instructions referred to the publication of decisions on current affairs as well as home and foreign news; but also, "research into the lives and works of ancient and modern poets, and a parcel of topics freely written".[25] No one was to be exempted from the obligation to take "state, *millatī* (here "communal") and learned journals". The Minister of Sciences, ʿAlī Qulī Mīrzā, the Iʿtiżād al-Salṭana, was responsible for the distribution of the requisite number of the papers in the provinces.

These publications included the *Ruznāma-yi ʿIlmī-yi Daulat-i ʿAlīya-yi Īrān* ("The Scientific Journal of the Exalted State of Iran"), begun as a weekly, although it appeared irregularly, in January 1868. There is an example to show that it gave Arabic as well as Persian material, and published an article on prose-verse, referring this style's invention to Abuʾl-ʿAlī al-Maʿarrī (d. 449/1058).[26]

[24] Ādamīyat, p. 367. [25] Ṣadr Hāshimī, vol. 1, p. 5.
[26] Browne, *Press and poetry*, pp. 95–6.

Scholarly research into literary matters seems to have become a legitimate branch of learning in an Iran which was gaining awareness of western efforts and methods applied to its own major asset in a great literature.

Of the eleven hundred registered recipients of newspapers and journals, two hundred and eighty in the capital comprised the majority. Second was Āẕarbāījān, with one hundred and sixty-six, which betokens the cultural and educational zeal of the Iranian northwestern province that has been termed Iran's window on the West. Another northern province with trading connections across the frontier was Khurāsān, which, after the Russians had pacified the trans-frontier area and begun railway construction through it in the 1880s, communicated with Āẕarbāījān by the Caspian–Caucasus route in preference to caravan travel through Tehran to Tabrīz. Khurāsān registered eighty newspaper-takers. Fārs and Kirmān, in the south, enjoyed close commercial relations with British India; they registered sixty-six and eight respectively. Ṣadr Hāshimī (vol. 1, p. 6) praises the excellence of newspaper production in Nāṣir al-Dīn and Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh's time as much as he deplores its later decline.

He dates the liberation of the Press from state control and the issue of "free newspapers" by private individuals, to Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh's reign (1896–1907). More precisely, to Muḥammad Ḥusain Iṣfahānī, Ẕakāʾ al-Mulk's publication of *Tarbiyat*, a weekly "lithographed in very fine *nastaʿlīq* in Tehran A.H. 1314 [= A.D. 1896–7]".[27] This man has already been alluded to and assumed the pen-name Furūghī – it later served as a surname for his family – by grace of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh. Muḥammad Ḥusain had been taken up by the Iʿtimād al-Salṭana after an adventurous early life which had embraced trading, contacts in western Iran with Ṣūfī brotherhoods, and extensive travel in southern Iran. He was born in 1255/1839 and died in 1909. In 1308/1890–1 he became head of the government Press. He also taught in the Dār al-Funūn's department of political science, and he worked on the newspapers *Sharaf* ("Honour") (1882) and *Īrān* (1871), which he superintended until 1882. He became Ẕakāʾ al-Mulk, The Light of the Realm, in 1894.

Furūghī, both by his distinctive style and publishing many of his own poems in it, conferred on *Tarbiyat* a literary importance which, in the opinion of some, was marred by flattery of notables.[28] Although Ṣadr Hāshimī makes this publication signal the advent of a "free Press", he is at pains to explain the restrictions still affecting publications other than the government's. In 1871 the Ministry of Sciences lost control of newspapers to a Press Ministry, the *Vizārat-i*

[27] *Ibid.*, p. 61. [28] *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.*

Inṭibāʿāt. This Ministry recommended to the Ṣadr-i Aʿẓam, Prime Minister, which journals should be licensed to publish. One example of a paper which encountered problems was *al-Islām*, produced by Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī, the Dāʿī al-Islām ("Propagator of Islam"). His *al-Islām* was later changed to *Guftagānī-yi Ṣafā-khāna-yi Iṣfahān*, "Some Discourses of the House of Purity of Isfahān". It was suspended by the authorities for five months in 1903; but in keeping with a practice to be noticed in more recent days, its proprietor had recourse to another of his publications, in the safety of Bombay, called the *Daʿvat al-Islām*, "Islam's Call".

Topics to be published were subject to inspection by officials of the Press Ministry and their provincial representatives. Under the prime ministers, Mīrzā ʿAlī Aṣghar Khān the Amīn al-Sulṭān, later Atābak-i Aʿẓam, and the ʿAin al-Daula, between 1903 and 1906, restrictions on the Press were increased. This was the period when Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī fell foul of the government. His paper was devoted only to religious topics, but it was the ʿAin al-Daula whom Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Asadābādī (see p. 193) described, in a famous letter of 1891 to Mīrzā Ḥasan of Shīrāz, the Chief Mujtahid of the time and at Sāmarrā in Irāq, as "a wicked freethinker".[29] Nevertheless, Ṣadr Hāshimī considers the appellation "free newspaper" appropriate for papers issued in the reign of Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh when, as he says, "Ẕakāʾ al-Mulk was the first to make the style of the newspaper in Iran other than that dry and spiritless one of government Court journals".

In addition to the controls referred to above, censorship was first introduced in Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's time when he became incensed over a verse satire published in Bombay. The author was a Shaikh Ḥasan-i Shīrāzī, who ridiculed the aspirants to learning patronized by the Court. The Shah demanded of the Iʿtimād al-Salṭana how such pernicious attacks printed abroad and critical of his régime might be stopped entering Iran. The Iʿtimād al-Salṭana explained how European states had an arrangement called *Sānsūr*, "Censor". The Shah commanded the establishment of such a system so that "henceforth the way of this vice might be blocked and the thread of this traffic broken".[30]

While still Crown Prince and governor of Āẕarbāījān, in 1879 Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh had himself shown an interest in promoting the Press by being instrumental in having a weekly called *Tabrīz* produced. In 1872 *Fārs* appeared in Shīrāz while seven years later the Prince-Governor of Iṣfahān, Masʿūd Mīrzā, the Ẓill al-Sulṭan, had instituted publication in that city, of a journal called

[29] Browne, *Persian Revolution*, p. 17.
[30] Ṣadr Hāshimī, vol. 1, p. 10; Āryanpūr, vol. 1, p. 250.

Farhang ("Culture"). It was under the direction of a polymath said to be acquainted with European sciences as well as those of Islam. This Mīrzā Taqī Khān Kāshānī was a writer celebrated for clarity of expression. He was the author of treatises on natural science and astronomy.

These events marked the beginnings of a provincial Press, although, as might be expected, Tabrīz had blazed the trail as early as 1859, for which year a paper there called *Rūznāma-yi Millatī* ("The National Journal") is mentioned by Āryanpūr.[31] An innovation early in the new reign was the appearance of the first daily paper, *Khulāṣat al-Ḥavādis̱* ("News Summary") in October 1898, soon after Muẓaffar al-Dīn's accession. It was a digest of world news received in telegrams destined for India from Reuters in London and furnished by the British Legation in Tehran. The *Khulāṣat* was a government sheet and as such bore the Lion and Sun emblem, but it was the brain-child of Muḥammad Bāqir Khān. The latter had succeeded his uncle on the latter's death, just before Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's assassination in the spring of 1896, both as head of the Press Ministry and in the title of Iᶜtimād al-Salṭana. The paper survived until December 1903.

The pretexts for censorship, to inhibit publication of material harmful to infants and also contrary to religious law, were set out in issue number 552 of 22 December 1863, of the *Daulat-i ᶜAlīya-yi Īrān* newspaper. This item, probably written by the Iᶜtimād al-Salṭana himself, is of interest because it refers more than once not only to readers, *khwānandagān*, but to listeners, *shinavandagān*, and because it can be compared for its style to an official announcement on the same sort of theme in the *Īrān* of 1 March 1901, which might have been by Ẕakāʾ al-Mulk Furūghī. The reference to listeners is significant because, while it would be legitimate to ask how newspapers might have such a dangerous influence in a land where the majority of people were illiterate, features of that land were declamation, song, recitation and reading aloud. These were the natural concomitants of widespread illiteracy and more than a palliative to a lack of literacy which was not necessarily regarded as disastrous or unnatural. It was probably one reason why illiteracy for all but a few persisted; the popularity of poetry, which has permeated Iranian society in a manner characteristic of few others, can also be related to widespread illiteracy. The power of the spoken word remained sufficiently influential, when credited, for Āyatullāh Khumainī's use of exhortatory cassettes when he was in exile in the period leading up to 1979, to be important in mobilizing the crowds who made the Iranian Revolution.

Muḥammad Taqī Khān, the Malik al-Shuᶜarā Bahār, discusses the rise of two

[31] Āryanpūr, vol. 1, p. 246; also Browne, *Press and poetry*, p. 12, n. 2.

schools after increased contact with Europe in the last half of the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh (reigned 1797–1834).[32] The conservatives wished to adhere to the old style of writing. The new school sought to eschew prolixity, Arabic synonyms for Persian words, and redundancies. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh himself espoused the new style in the travel diaries published after his journeys to Karbalā and Europe. When that of the visit to Karbalā was lithographed in 1874, the secretary responsible for preparing the manuscript for publication wrote a preface, in the old style, in which, lest it should be supposed that the Shah was incapable of anything better, he explained that the Shah had restricted himself to straightforward descriptions in a laconic style "amenable to plebian understanding".[33]

Of the two official announcements about the need to avoid publication of things harmful to morality and the state, the first, of 1863, is written in a not excessively "conservative" style but in a good blending of the somewhat old-fashioned style with the directness originally aimed for by the Qāʾim-Maqām Farāhānī. The 1901 proclamation differs from that of 1863 chiefly in the choice of vocabulary. Oddly enough it still shows the redundancies of the older piece, but the words chosen are simpler and this is where the evidence lies for its being more modern than the piece of thirty-eight years earlier. But a factor to be noticed is that the second piece is altogether less reflective or tentative than the first. It is aimed at imported newspapers in Persian produced outside Iran, the government of which they severely took to task for the "lack of security, the tyranny, lawlessness, ruin, poverty and ignorance" of the country, and it was issued under the prime-ministership of Mīrzā ʿAlī Aṣghar Khān, the Amīn al-Sulṭān, later the Atābak-i Aʿẓam.

The words quoted above come from Bahār's extracts from the notebooks of a man very different from the Atābak. He was Mīrzā ʿAlī Khān, the Amīn al-Daula, who lasted hardly a year as Muẓaffar al-Dīn's first prime minister. He was a liberal and a reformer, encouraged the Press, and was innovative both in the style of hand-writing and simplifying of expression, as exemplified by his *Safarnāma-yi Bait-Allāh*, ("Record of a Journey to the House of God"), recording his Meccan voyage.[34] He was replaced as prime minister by Mīrzā ʿAlī Aṣghar Khān in 1899. In 1901 Mīrzā ʿAlī Aṣghar proscribed Persian journals printed abroad. In the summer of 1907 he was assassinated by a young Āẕarbāījānī *ṣarrāf* (money changer). In the early part of Muẓaffar al-Dīn's reign this prime minister stopped short of exile, prison and torture for newspapers'

[32] *Sabk-shināsī* IV, pp. 371 ff. [33] *Nukhustīn Kungira*, p. 135.
[34] Bahār, *op. cit.* III, pp. 381–4.

editors. He simply confiscated the imported papers his minions could discover, but when Sulṭān ʿAbd al-Majīd Mīrzā, the ʿAin al-Daula (whose title, Mīrzā, came after and not in front of his name, for he was a royal prince, a grandson of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh), assumed office in 1904, the movement demanding a Constitution, *mashrūṭa*, was growing. It was met head-on by the ʿAin al-Daula's dictactorial policy. Meanwhile the nation at large was easily tutored into the belief that he was responsible for the raising of foreign loans. His dismissal in August 1906 was one of the Constitutionalists' requirements. His treatment of the Press was as high-handed as doubtless he considered the situation called for: distinguished editors and proprietors were maltreated and exiled to remote coasts and mountain strongholds. He died a natural death in 1926.

The papers printed outside Iran were important enough in both the development of journalism within it and in the fostering of the Constitutional Movement of 1906, to deserve special comment. *Irshād* ("Guidance") was a Turkish daily printed in Baku. Adīb al-Mamālik had founded two papers under the title, *Adab* ("Civility") in Tabrīz and Mashhad. That from Tabrīz was moved to Tehran in 1904, but from 1905 Adīb al-Mamālik joined *Irshād*'s editor, Aḥmad Beg Aghayoff Qarābāghī, in Baku and began to contribute a Persian language supplement to *Irshād*.

Akhtar ("The Star") was the first "modern style" Persian paper printed abroad. It was promoted originally by an Iranian official in Istanbul, the Tabrīzī, Mīrzā Najaf-qulī Khān.[35] Its editor was Muḥammad Ṭāhir, but according to Ṣadr Hāshimī, it was mostly written by Mīrzā Mahdī of Tabrīz, son of a merchant of the same city, Ḥājjī Ibrāhīm, so that once more the social background and urban ethos of these workers in journalism becomes evident. The paper lasted from 1875 until its suspension by the Turkish authorities some twenty years later. It was so highly regarded in so wide an area that newspaper-sellers came to be nicknamed "Akhtar".[36] The Persian original of Browne's *Press and Poetry in Modern Iran* records that the "light of civilisation shone from its pages". Ordinary folk in the Caucasus and elsewhere called the educated *Akhtarī-Maẕhab*, the "Akhtarite Sect", as if it were, as in a sense it was, the harbinger of a new religious doctrine. Discussion groups based their debates on its latest words. It was particularly influential among Iranian exiles, a category of Iranian with which the world has become, not least in the 1980s, familiar. It is a category that has shown itself too eager to publish journals and pamphlets, periodicals and manifestos, for any survey of modern literary output to ignore it.

[35] But see Browne, *Literary History* IV, p. 468.

[36] Browne, *Press and poetry*, pp. 17–18.

However adverse their circumstances may be, Iranians never lose sight of the great asset they have in their language, and are ever adept in putting it to use.

Among *Akhtar*'s contributors, in addition to its later editor, Hājjī Mīrzā Aḥmad of Tabrīz, were Mīrzā Āqā Khān and Shaikh Aḥmad-i Rūḥī, both of Kirmān. This latter was a correspondent of E.G. Browne and must be mentioned again in the context of the translation of Morier's *Hājjī Bābā of Iṣfahān*. Both men were executed in Tabrīz in 1897. Two of those engaged on *Akhtar* later edited *Ṣurayyā* ("The Pleiades"), *Parvarish* ("Education") and *Ḥikmat* ("Wisdom") in Egypt. *Akhtar* began as a daily, then it became a twice weekly and finally a weekly publication. In style, Persian words and derivations were preferred to Arabic, but the latter were used when helpful for the sake of clarity. Repetitive synonyms, a feature of the old style, were avoided and an element of terseness prevailed, but not to such an extent as to mar either the attractiveness or message of what was communicated. It should, however, be observed that this laconic tendency, besides being in marked contrast to what critics abhorred in the older conventions of Persian prose, no doubt owed much to the fact that a number of items in *Akhtar* were taken from foreign, mostly London, papers. Based on telegraphic reports, this system of news-gathering resulted in the shaping of a succinct Persian, a development in which the telegraph obviously played a part. There is copious evidence for the skill in translation from European languages those employed on *Akhtar* generated. They seem to have worked as a team to such a degree that, as will be seen below, confusion could arise over who translated what.

Issues of Mīrzā Malkum Khān's *Qānūn* ("Law") generally bore no date, but the first appeared in London on 21 February 1890. Its style is exhortatory, rhetorical and often Arabicized, as if the better to reach the religious fraternity by using their familiar idiom. E.G. Browne gives some originals, with translations, of its sometimes vituperative political asseverations in his *The Persian Revolution, 1905–1909* (pp. 35–42). *Qānūn* ran to forty-two monthly issues. It was rigorously banned in Iran but, even though they suffered if caught with them, people obtained copies. Its major theme was Iran's need for impartial and competent administration of justice, *ʿadālat*, which was reflected in the Constitutionalists' initial call for an *ʿAdālatkhāna*, House of Justice. Ultimately came the call for a representative assembly. After the latter came into existence, *Qānūn*, of which copies had become scarce, was in 1908 reprinted, a decade or so after its publication had ceased with the forty-second issue in 1898.[37]

[37] See Hamid Algar, *Mīrzā Malkum Khān*, p. 239 and Wright, *op. cit.*, p. 160 for comment on Malkum's motives in publishing *Qānūn*.

Surayyā was published from October 1898 to October 1900 in Egypt, as was the weekly *Parvarish*, from June 1900 until March 1901. The latter's quality was enhanced by the writing of Mīrzā ʿAlī Muḥammad Khān Kāshānī (d. 1903). *Ḥikmat*, published in Cairo, was edited by Kāshānī's former colleague on *Akhtar*, Mahdī Tabrīzī, the Zaʿīm al-Daula. It was published every ten days. Mīrzā Mahdī later visited Tehran, where he was praised by the Atābak-i-Aʿẓam, in 1899. Soon after Muẓaffar al-Dīn's accession and some six years after the founding of *Ḥikmat* he was gazetted (in *Īrān*) in November 1901 as *Zaʿīm al-Daula*, "Spokesman of the State", for services abroad to "the State and the Faith". Aḥmad Kasravī later remarked that neither this honour nor a state pension of three hundred tūmāns a year diverted him, "so far as we know, from the Path".[38]

This episode, and the ʿAin al-Daula's raising of the ban on another Persian-language publication from Egypt, *Chihra-numā* ("Face Revealer"), which began in April 1904 and was forbidden entry into Iran the same year, indicate that Iranian ministers were not above attempting to mollify their critics, or at least bending to persuasion that a prohibited paper was not in fact obnoxious. Mīrzā Ḥasan "Rushdīya", the educational reformer, succeeded in influencing the ʿAin al-Daula in this respect, although the latter would certainly have political motives of his own for any feints he might try with organs of the Press. Yet of the *Chihra-numā* he wrote in September 1907 that he was satisfied that no impediment should be put on its distribution in Iran since "the more the means of knowledge and understanding are spread, the greater will be their yield for the State and the people".[39] In such an observation the influence of Rushdīya is apparent.

The Qurʾān, Chapter III, verses 98 and 108, enjoins taking refuge in the bond of Allāh, *biḥabliʾllāh*, and men not bound in a bond from Allāh and a bond from the people, *ḥablin min Allāh wa ḥablin min al-nās*, are threatened with degradation. The *Ḥabl al-Matīn*, "Firm Bond", – the idea is co-operation through unity – was probably the most important and most enduring of the papers of the Constitutional period. The first number, lithographed, appeared on 19 December 1893 in Calcutta under the control of Sayyid Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ḥusainī, Muʾayyid al-Islām. It was still in production in 1912, but in 1905 had gone over to metal type. It carried a supplement devoted entirely to religious topics. Its appeal went beyond the nascent lay intelligentsia to the religious classes, as if to portend the combination of concerns and outlooks which is a feature of Iranian protest and

[38] Aḥmad Kasravī, *Tārīkh-i Mashrūṭa-yi Īrān*, p. 41; Ṣadr Hāshimī, vol. II, p. 229.
[39] Ṣadr Hāshimī, vol. I, p. 14.

reformative impulses. ʿAlī Aṣghar Khān, the Amīn al-Sulṭān, prohibited its importation into Iran in 1901, but it was still read, and published a *takfīr-nāma*, a declaration that ʿAlī Aṣghar Khān was a *kāfir* (unbeliever), which the Shīʿī authorities in Najaf had endorsed. It was very active during the Constitution's first setback between 1908 and 1911, the period of the *Istibdād-i ṣaghīr*, "The Lesser Despotism", when Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāh reinstated autocracy. The *Ḥabl al-Matīn* urged the *ʿulamā* to action on behalf of democracy. As did the Persian presses in Istanbul, Cairo and Alexandria, the Calcutta *Ḥabl al-Matīn* press produced books as well as the newspaper and various periodicals. These activities included journals in English and Urdu.[40]

Aḥmad Kasravī says that one of the ways in which the *Ḥabl al-Matīn*'s influence was spread (it went to religious teachers in Najaf and other Seminary centres free), was through the bounty of Ḥājjī Zain al-ʿĀbidīn Taqiyoff. He had already munificently supported the pre-revolution movement to bring education to Iranian towns and cities. He provided money and teaching materials for the establishment of secondary schools, with which Mīrzā ʿAlī Khān, the Amīn al-Daula, and especially Ḥājjī Mīrzā Ḥasan Rushdīya of Tabrīz were associated; the latter also edited two newspapers. The first of these *dabistān*s, schools, was opened by Rushdīya in Tabrīz in 1896. Shaikh Ḥasan Maqāmī urged the faithful to read the *Ḥabl al-Matīn* and so gave it the blessing of the *Marjaʿ-i Taqlīd*, the supreme religious exemplar of the time. Although he reports that the *Ḥabl al-Matīn* was constantly in debt, Ṣadr Hāshimī repeats the information that each week five thousand copies of the paper went free to members of the religious classes, out of a total of thirty-five thousand printed, which will be seen to be a large number even by comparison with circulation figures for the Iranian Press in more modern times.[41] Among solutions this paper offered for the evils it criticized was Constitutional government and government according to the Law of the Faith, *Ḥukūmat-i Mashrūṭa* and *Mushrūʿa*.[42]

It is said that Muʾayyid al-Islam, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Ḥusainī, wrote most of the *Ḥabl al-Matīn* himself. Assuming that this means the political and religious articles, it also means that this scion of high-ranking religious authorities on both the paternal and maternal side was immensely influential. Copies of his paper went to Persian-speakers throughout the Islamic world and, in Urdu, to the Muslims of the sub-continent. After his death in 1929 in Calcutta, he was buried at Mashhad with the reverential obsequies considered the due of a man who had conspicuously served the Constitutional cause. He was born in

[40] Browne, *Press and poetry*, p. 74; Ṣadr Hāshimī, vol. II, p. 207.
[41] Ṣadr Hāshimī, vol. II, p. 206. [42] Kasravī, p. 42.

December 1863 in Kāshān, of a line of ʿulamā and mujtahids. The respect so many later accorded him was not, it must be said, subscribed to by Aḥmad Kasravī. He describes him as a time-serving opportunist.[43] His allegation that *Ḥabl al-Matīn*'s editor was ready to publish flattery of men in power might be an indication of al-Ḥusainī's preference for conciliation, *āshtī*, seen by prudent and properly pious Iranians as a virtue to be pursued instead of vindictiveness, and, at the outset of his paper, *Qānūn*, also urged by Mīrzā Malkum Khān. Neither man was short on invective against those powerful personalities they conceived to be implacably opposed to their principles. Īrānparast's biographical note on the Muʾayyid al-Islām in the magazine *Armaghān*[44] would not have Aḥmad Kasravī's peculiarly anti-clerical bias, and was written by a close associate of its subject. It might err towards flattery, but it attests to the Sayyid's asceticism and simple life, in harmony with the sacrifices he made for the sake of the aspirations he professed to serve.

Comment on the life of the proprietor and chief composer of *Ḥabl al-Matīn* is not out of place: it holds before the glass of posterity the type of Iranian engaged in writing in order to promote what has been called Iran's Awakening. Īrānparast, the son of the Dāʿī al-Islām already mentioned (p. 828), provides useful details of al-Ḥusainī's foreign and domestic travel, all over Iran and outside it, in Singapore, Oman, Mesopotamia, and of times spent with a variety of important teachers before settlement, first in Bombay in 1890–1, and finally Calcutta. There the Sayyid began in commerce. He was obviously a man of the world as well as one versed in the religious life, but there is evidence that he was no bigot. Īrānparast interestingly suggests that *Ḥabl al-Matīn*'s appearance some three years after *Qānūn*'s may be related to the earlier publishing event. He speaks of Jamāl al-Dīn Asadābādī and Mīrzā Malkum Khān as having been in correspondence with Muʾayyid al-Islām, and of how they together concluded that the "revolution in thinking of which Iran stood in poignant need could come about only under the auspices of the Press". Hamid Algar shows evidence that, in his turn, the publisher of *Qānūn* was influenced by the Turkish Press, especially *Hürriyat* ("Freedom"), to which, in August 1869, Malkum Khān sent an important letter urging reform of the Arabic script, which he saw as a barrier to the clearing away of ignorance. This script was, he implied, a bastion defended by the religious authorities, the ʿulamā, whom he blamed for persisting in "a state of ignorance and absolute rejection of European science and progress", so that the Islamic Faith was heading for destruction.[45] Algar points out

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 63. [44] See Ṣadr Hāshimī, vol. II, p. 205. [45] Algar, p. 89.

that the Turkish paper *Hürriyat* "was explicitly an organ of opposition in exile", first produced in London, later Geneva, and of a pattern adopted for *Ḥabl al-Matīn*'s predecessor, *Qānūn*.[46] Whatever Malkum Khān's and Sayyid Jalāl al-Ḥusainī's sources of inspiration were, they relentlessly used their papers to prepare their compatriots' minds for change. In London and Calcutta, and on their travels, they saw evidence of the challenge which made the need for change in the Islamic world seem so urgent.

Papers also called *Ḥabl al-Matīn* appeared in Tehran, edited by Sayyid Jalāl's brother, Ḥasan-i Kāshāni, from the year 1907, and, likewise under Sayyid Ḥasan's control, in Rasht in 1909, when he had been in exile in the Caucasus during the first year of the Lesser Autocracy. As for the style of *Ḥabl al-Matīn*, Īrānparast remarks that Sayyid Jalāl's formal education had mainly been in theological and juridical studies, the traditional education of the religious classes. He was also acquainted with mathematics, but far less with poetry and letters. Hence he wrote an idiosyncratic style in which rather out-of-the-way metaphors, similes and allusions occurred, but which was free from literary flourishes. As much as to the writer's educational background, these stylistic characteristics might be attributed to his sense of urgency and having a definite message to deliver. The articles read with what can be described as a fluent toughness arising from a clear mind, from which a sense of humour, a lively sense of the ridiculous, is not as conspicuously absent as, for example, in the composition of *Qānūn*. There is mockery, but it is too intelligent to be, perhaps, as bitter and waspish as the serious Kasravī might have expected.

Besides being humorous, the Sayyid was practical. He wrote, in September 1910, on the desirability of theoretical and practical teaching and training being combined in educational programmes, and he took Japan as his model:

> National educational enterprises' ultimate reason being to know rights and to obviate dependence on foreigners, whenever the Iranians imitate the Japanese in the principles of general education, benefits will follow.
>
> In Japan's public schools, the teaching of theoretical and technical subjects have been twinned. One stream of their educational process is in practical techniques. Each of their Primary Schools is equipped for one or two manufacturing operations, to which the pupils are obliged to devote themselves for a time each day.
>
> No individual among the Japanese people is incapable of doing a job: whether he would or not, he knows a few technical processes. Thus in time of need he might at least earn a livelihood . . .

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 188.

Here, in the original, phrases like *dast-shikasta*, "shiftless; unable to do a job", more colloquial than literary, are frequently used throughout the paper's issues, as are popular adages. The plain and often popular style of *Ḥabl al-Matīn* helped to open the way for literary developments to be discussed below.

The first Iranian Parliament, *Majlis-i Shurā-yi Millī*, National Consultative Assembly, Majlis for short, was opened on 7 October 1906. By December a newspaper appeared, to report its proceedings and called *Majlis*. This paper marked an innovation. In keeping with the sense of liberation conferred by the winning of a Constitution (5 August 1906), the paper's founders, Muḥammad Ṣādiq and Āqā Mīrzā Muḥsin Ṭabāṭabāʾī the Mujtahid, both sons of the fighter for the Constitution, Āqā Sayyid Muḥammad Ṭabāṭabāʾī, obtained a rescript from Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh which confirmed that the *Majlis* was a free paper, not subject to the Ministry of the Press or any state control. This rescript was the first *imtiyāz-nāma* or licence officially granted to persons wishing to publish a journal not a government gazette. To have the word *āzād*, "free", included in this document was a victory for the deputies in the first Parliament.

At first, however, with the *Majlis* quickly followed by the weekly, *Nidā-yi Vaṭan* ("The Call of the Homeland"), under Majd al-Islām of Kirmān, and *Ṣūr-i Isrāfīl* ("The Trumpet Call of Isrāfīl"[47]), and with the increase in provincial papers in 1907, the Ministry of the Press, reigned over by Iʿtimād al-Salṭana's successors, was slow to adjust to the new situation. This new situation meant, as the radical *Ṣūr-i Isrāfīl* put it, that the authors of a book or article need no longer "leave off work for several days and start running about, going to the door of the office of the Head of the Press Department or his deputy, and his clerk, and the registrar and the office messenger-boy, to mouth a thousand flatteries and hand over two rials in cash and two copies of the work in question, for its margins to receive the impress of a seal and a signature".

For publishing this Mīrzā Jahāngīr Khān Shīrāzī was summoned by the Mukhbir al-Salṭana, of the Ministry of Education and Endowments, to appear at the Dār al-Funūn and explain himself, and in particular the reference to handing over cash. His article also stated a fervently held assumption of the Constitutionalists, that "our government is a Constitution and publications must also, as in other constitutional states of the world, be free". A subsequent piece, "Half an Hour at the Dār al-Funūn", expressed the opinion that the hateful word

[47] The angel who will sound the Last Trump.

"censor" should be consigned to school history books, to teach children how matters had stood before Constitution. But while the *Majlis* had been granted freedom, *Nidā-yi Vaṭan* was subject to state control.

The deputies representing Tabrīz arrived in Tehran in February 1907 and were ardent in supporting the new freedoms. An *anjuman*, society or club, called the Gulistān and one of the first of many such associations, was formed by Majlis deputies in Tehran. It included in its deliberations the question of continued overseeing of publications in spite of Article 20 of the Supplementary Fundamental Laws of 7 October 1907: "All publications, except heretical books and material harmful to the Perspicacious Religion [of Islam], are free and exempt from censorship." In February 1908 a Press Law was passed to confirm the intention of this Article. Even this did not go far enough for some of its critics. A newspaper called *Musāvāt* ("Equality"), founded under Sayyid Muḥammad Riżā Shīrāzī in October 1907, published satires on the new law. These satires have a special literary significance. In addition to the *Mullā Naṣr al-Dīn* Turkish newspaper, published in Tiflis in 1906–7, they helped to set the tone for the facetiae which *Ṣūr-i Isrāfīl*'s chief contributor, Mīrzā ʿAlī Akbar Khān Dihkhudā of Qazvīn (c. 1880–1955) wrote as "Dakhau", Qazvīnī dialect for *dihkhudā* (village head). His satirical pieces were called *Charand Parand*, "Stuff and Nonsense".[48] At least the *Musāvāt* pieces were evidence that such facetiae were not without precedent. Rather, they were in a tradition of innuendo ancient in a land experienced in ways to survive under oppression. It is a tradition associated with the name Buhlūl, which was the title of one of the comic satirical papers published in the period under review.[49] Shaikh Abū Vahīb ibn ʿAmr Sīrījī Kūfī, who flourished in A.D. 806 in the time of Hārūn al-Rashīd, was the historical Buhlūl. He was a learned man who posed as a lunatic, thus to become a prototype for the Wise Fool. Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmi (d. 1273) has a verse in the *Masnavī* in which the word *Buhlūl* occurs:

Rau ki na-shanāsam turā; az man bi-jih: ʿārif-i bī-khwīsh-am u buhlūl-i dih
Go for I know you not. Get away from me.
I am a gnostic beside myself: the Buhlūl of the village.

Sayyid Muḥammad Riżā "Musāvāt", who, like many of the editor-proprietors, was surnamed with the name of his paper, spoke for other editors when he demurred over a law exempting all but whatever writings someone might allege to be "heretical" and opposed to the Faith. He called his nonsense pieces "The

[48] Browne, *Literary History* IV, pp. 469–82.
[49] See Browne, *Press and poetry*, p. 57 and a caricature from the paper, which began in May 1911.

Celebration of the Press Law's Appearance". He justified this farrago of idle tales and phantasies as a change, from the rational treatment of topics once the characteristic of his paper, that had been imposed upon him by the need to keep on the right side of the "auspicious" new law. He did not succeed: these sallies and an article headed "How's the Shah?" resulted in *Musāvāt*'s suppression and his being hunted after the bombardment of the Majlis on 23 June 1908. He began *Musāvāt* again in Tabrīz in 1909, after his escape from Tehran.

The Lesser Constitutional Period of 1906 to 1908 and the beginning of the Lesser Autocracy, saw an increase in newspaper publication that can be measured by allusions to every paper extant at the time contained in a poem published on 2 June 1908 by the editor of *Chihra-numā*, the illustrated Persian paper published first in Alexandria and later in Cairo. Mīrzā ʿAbd al-Muḥammad Iṣfahānī returned to Iran for four months. Back in Egypt he recorded his acquaintance with the Iranian Press of the first days of freedom in a poem which opens,

Pen, bearer of my secrets,
Precious purveyor of my thoughts. . . .

He goes on to name some eighty newspapers, of which only about nine or ten of those published in Iran pre-date the Constitution.[50]

Another phenomenon of the Constitutional period was the *shabnāma*, Night Letter, single-sided "jelly-typed" sheets which were unsigned and distributed nocturnally, hence their name. To the surprise of some, since a supposedly free Press had come into existence, they were continued long after the Constitution had been ratified. As did the anjumans, these shabnāmas profoundly excited the suspicion and ire of Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāh, the anti-Constitutionalist monarch who succeeded Muẓaffar al-Dīn Shāh in January 1907. A few reformers, as we have seen, had originally raised an Iranian voice abroad. One of them was Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn Asadābādī. In 1884, with the collaboration of the Egyptian modernist theologian, Muḥammad ʿAbdūh, he had published a paper in Arabic called *al-ʿUrwa al-Wuthqā* ("The Indissoluble Link").[51] Others have already been mentioned, but now this voice-in-exile became a clamour in Iran itself as it gathered resonance after the inauguration of the first Majlis. Especially, however, in media like the shabnāmas, although more substantial journals were not exempt, scurrility and the pursuance of personal vendettas soon began to manifest themselves. This was a lapse from the high-mindedness and virtuous

[50] Ṣadr Hāshimī, vol. 1, pp. 22–3.
[51] For further details see Nikki Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal al-Din "al-Afghani"*, pp. 214–23.

aspirations of earlier publications; but the wit of the "buhlulism" alluded to above, and the brilliant caricatures, meant to be funny as well as critical, which appeared in a number of publications of the time, should not be counted part of the deterioration here being noticed.

Early newspaper illustration, which has been dated to 1860–1,[52] has already been alluded to, but the caricature became a feature of certain journals during the Constitutional Movement, a prominent element in which was protest against the granting of concessions to foreigners, so that a Ṣadr-i Aʿẓam might be depicted carving up the map of Iran into lots to sell to aliens. The skill shown in these cartoons demonstrates the Iranian genius for finding or adapting ways to witty expression of protest and for the exposure of social and political ills and the malfeasance of those in authority. As with the cassette tapes bearing the voice of Āyatullāh Khumainī and imported on the eve of the 1979 revolution, so with the caricature, Iranian critics of the ruling régime were quick to adopt an effective technique for their purpose, and one which would overcome the barrier of illiteracy.

Muḥammad ʿAlī Shāh ordered the Cossack Brigade under the Russian officer, Colonel Liakhoff, to bombard the Majlis building on 23 June 1908. Leading members of the Press fled or were captured. Several were put to death, including Mīrzā Jahāngīr Khān of *Ṣūr-i Isrāfīl*, and the proprietor of the *Rūḥ al-Quds*, ("Holy Spirit"), Sulṭān al-ʿUlamā Khurāsānī.[53] The latter had published an attack on the Shah, whom he had reminded of the fate of Louis XVI of France. Among those who escaped was Dihkhudā, who in 1909 published another *Ṣūr-i Isrāfīl* from Switzerland, for four issues. As has been seen, *Musāvāt* re-emerged under the Sayyid Muḥammad Riżā in Tabrīz, in January 1909.

When the Constitutionalists achieved the *Fatḥ-i Millī*, National Victory, in Tehran, Muḥammad ʿAlī abdicated in favour of his son, Aḥmad Shāh, proclaimed king in July 1909. Newspapers were revived and began to show identifiable allegiances to political parties or, rather, factions and often ephemeral groupings, an extension of the traditional Iranian *daura*s (coteries), which now adopted political slogans and came out into the open. These groups themselves promoted papers to carry their call. Newpapers proliferated. With the forcible dissolution of the third Majlis on 24 December 1911, a period of ten years ensued without a Parliament. It was during this interval that Ṣadr Hāshimī says the Iranian Press really "came of age" (vol. 1, p. 25). A large number of papers came into action to ensure that Iran's first steps towards democracy

[52] Browne, *Press and poetry*, p. 16. [53] Ṣadr Hāshimī, vol. 1, p. 24.

would not be forgotten and would be retrieved. The titles of some of these papers furnish a roll-call indicative of the political mood of the time: *Sitāra-yi Īrān*, "Star of Iran"; *Īrān-i Āzād*, "Free Iran"; *Raʿd*, "Thunder"; *Barq*, "Lightning"; *ʿAṣr-i Jadīd*, "The New Era"; *Nau Bahār*, "The New Spring"; *Shafaq-i Surkh*, "Red Twilight"; *Ṣadā-yi Īrān*, "Voice of Iran"; *ʿAṣr-i Inqilāb*, "The Age of Revolution"; *Mīhan*, "The Home Land"; *Zabān-i Āzād*, "Free Speech"; *Mard-i Āzād*, "The Free Man"; *Rāhnamā*, "Guide"; *Badr*, "The Full Moon"; *Taufīq*, "Divine Aid"; *Gul-i Zard va Zambūr*, "The Yellow Rose and the Bee". In the provinces, in Rasht, Iṣfahān, Tabrīz, Mashhad and Shīrāz particularly, the national spirit was raised by papers with titles like "The Voice of Gīlān", "Young Thought", "Perseverance", "The Way of Salvation", "The Spark".

The First World War provided topics which excited extensive reporting and comment in the columns and leading articles of Iranian newspapers. They were as if obsessed with foreign news of events that it was perfectly natural for intelligent Iranians to watch carefully, weighing up their consequences, most probably detrimental, but perhaps susceptible to being turned to advantage to Iran in its vulnerable geo-political position. Iranian intellectuals may have lived in what for them was an Iran-centred universe, but they were exceedingly aware of the international scene. In December 1918 the *Chihra-numā*, in Egypt, reported the suppression of *Raʿd*, *Shūrā* ("Consultation", an organ of the Moderates' party) and *Īrān-i Nau* ("New Iran") in 1917, and the suspension of further papers in the capital the following year. The proprietor of *Raʿd* left for Russia. Only official or trade journals were exempt from waves of suppression, which were generally attributed to pressure exerted on the Iranian authorities by the British and Russian envoys in Tehran. It is, therefore, interesting that in reporting these suppressions, *Chihra-numā* says the Tehran papers "were banned . . . on account of attacking each other and, taking sides with leading figures, degrading others and themselves". The inference is that the newspapers' own offensiveness made their continuation intolerable.[54] This does not, of course, rule out pressure on the part of the representatives of the Allies to have certain papers closed, but Malik al-Shuʿarā Bahār is said to have written such a scathing poem about another editor, of the newspaper *Shūrish*, that when his poems were later collected for a complete edition, this satire was considered unfit for retention. Regulations governing the granting of licences were made stricter during the war years. Licences had been granted by the Minister of Education latterly, on his own. Now they had to have the approval of the Council of

[54] *Ibid*, p. 26.

Ministers. Those already granted but not yet taken up were rescinded and had to be applied for under the new system.

While the state of the Press was unhappy and apparently somewhat degraded during these years, which were certainly disillusioning years for Iran – with no Parliament, a timid and inexperienced youthful king, and the country a prey to the inroads and plots of the Allies, the Central Powers and their Turkish ally – it is refreshing to turn to the publication, from 24 January to 15 August 1919, of *Kāva* in Berlin. This was the serious and beautifully printed journalistic enterprise of an Iranian intellectual "diaspora" caught or seeking refuge in Germany during the war. This group comprised the exceptional minds and intellects, in one or two instances genius, of reforming Iranian Democrats and Nationalists who had fled from Iran and particularly from Tabrīz, where since 1911 Russian oppression had been especially severe. They were acutely aware of the virtual suspension of their country's independence since the outbreak of the war, a situation anticipated and facilitated by the provisions of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, which left Russia uninhibited in whatever actions it chose to take in its alloted sphere of influence in northern Iran. Hence the paper, nominally a fortnightly publication but often appearing at irregular intervals, concentrated on these political issues and on social and particularly educational issues, including the sending of Iranian students to Europe. E.G. Browne, who does ample justice to this paper in his *Literary History of Persia* (vol. IV, pp. 483 ff.), and whose account is followed and amplified by Yaḥyā Āryanpūr, (vol. II, pp. 331 ff.), in fact nevertheless brands *Kāva* as an organ of propaganda in favour of Germany. It would be reasonable to say that in essence *Kāva*'s propaganda rôle was on behalf of freeing Iran from alien interference and to follow its own lights, but also very much in favour of modern education based firmly on that of western Europe. Influential members of the *Kāva* team were the Tabrīzī, Sayyid Ḥasan Taqīzāda, and the Iṣfahānī, Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Jamālzāda. Of the latter, more must be said in relation to the development of modern Persian literature, as also concerning the magazine *Kāva* which was inaugurated in January 1920 and survived until the end of 1921. It will be referred to in the section below on periodicals.

Sayyid Żiyā al-Dīn Ṭabāṭabāʾī began journalism with a weekly in Shīrāz. Then he published *Sharq*, "The East", and later, *Barq*, "Lightning", in Tehran, where he finally produced *Raʿd*, "Thunder". He typifies the newspaper publisher and politician whose political career is assisted by influence gained through journalism. By February 1921 Sayyid Żiyā was self-assured and, after travel in Europe and the Caucasus, a man of the world. He had sufficient

courage, as well as intelligence about the officers and morale of the Cossack Brigade, then officered by Iranians and stationed at Qazvīn, to stage a *coup d'état*, for which he used the Brigade and especially one of its most outstanding officers, Riżā Khān, as his military arm.[55] By 25 February, when he had formed the government he was thus empowered to do, Sayyid Żiyā shut down several of the capital's more important newspapers. When his short time in office ended with his resignation and exile on 25 May 1921, the newspapers were revived and new ones established. On 28 October 1923 Riżā Khān became prime minister after shrewdly avoiding doing so since Sayyid Żiyā's departure, during which time, as a relatively long-term War Minister, Riżā Khān built up an army effective enough to subdue the country under his direction as Sardār-i Sipāh, Commander-in-Chief.

Already during the Sardār-i Sipāh's time as Minister of War members of the Press had had occasion to read the signs of a not altogether auspicious future for their activities, although between 1921 and 1923 it would be untrue to say that all the organs in a volatile Press of often shifting loyalities were against Riżā Khān. But even to offer words of counsel to the man in whom hope for Iran's future stability lay was dangerous, as Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān Ṣabā discovered on being summoned to the War Ministry after publishing such words in his *Sitāra-yi Īrān*. The War Minister asked him what he meant, to which the editor replied, "I want you to be another Nādir" – Iran's last conquistador sovereign – but this expression of what might have been taken as a flattering avowal did not spare the journalist the flogging he was immediately ordered. As Malik al-Shuʿarā said, in connection with this incident, in his *Nau Bahār*, "The world of the Press in Tehran? One does not know . . ."[56]

It was on 3 July 1924, although the reports vary the day slightly, that Bahār says he was fetched to the Police Department hospital to find Sayyid Muḥammad Riżā, the son of Ḥājj Sayyid Abuʾl-Qāsim Kurdistānī, and known as Mīrzāda ʿIshqī, dying of gunshot wounds. They had been inflicted early that morning by two callers who pretended to be offering to take a letter for him to his home-town, Hamadān, where he was born in 1893. So this poet and editor of the cartoon-carrying *Qarn-i Bīstum*, "Twentieth Century", was thirty-one when he died later that day, probably chiefly from the loss of blood issuing from the several wounds his early-morning assailants had inflicted. Mustaufī, in what is

[55] See Donald Wilber, *Riza Shah Pahlavi*, p. 11 and ch. 3 and its notes for some account of the *coup d'état*; J.M. Balfour, *Recent Happenings in Persia*, pp. 216 ff; and *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919–1939*, First Series vol. XIII, *The Near and Middle East January 1920–March 1921* (H.M.S.O., 1963), pp. 729–33. [56] Ṣadr Hāshimī, vol. 1, p. 28.

probably the most objective account of the episode,[57] which he dates to 4 July 1924, asserts that the murder was assuredly the work of the authorities working through the Tehran police. He says ʿIshqī was attractive to many people as an ardent young writer and poet, but that he lacked the ballast of learning and also, consistency: in 1923 he published a biting satirical ballad against the fourth Majlis with the chorus, *dīdī chi khabar būd?*, "Did you see what was afoot?". It particularly attacked opponents of Rižā Khān the Sardār-i Sipāh and hence ranged ʿIshqī on his side. Later, over the Sardār's kite-flying proposal that Iran should become a Republic, ʿIshqī used *Qarn-i Bīstum* to support the Majlis Deputy, Mudarris, and the latter's minority following against the Sardār. He turned his venom onto the Prime Minister and the military apparatus that Rižā Khān had so assiduously built up.

In spite of his cool assessment of ʿIshqī's weaknesses, ʿAbd-Allāh Mustaufī's agrees with other accounts in claiming that the crowd at ʿIshqī's funeral was of unprecedented proportions, while the quest and chastisement of his murderers were, to say the least, perfunctory. He does not go so far as another source[58] in suggesting that the funeral was made a pretext for a demonstration on their behalf promoted by the Qājārs, whose Aḥmad Shāh was still in name the sovereign. The tenor of ʿAbd-Allāh Mustaufī's argument is based on his awareness that in the circumstances the mourners needed no such impulsion: they were following a time-worn Iranian precedent of using an occasion such as a funeral to make a silent political protest. The murder of a young Sayyid and poet would of itself excite a sense of outrage and Mustaufī includes this among the main reasons for the large number of mourners; but he makes opposition to Rižā Khān, "whom they saw as the instigator of the murder", the mainspring of the protest.[59]

ʿIshqī's death marked a new phase in the history of the Iranian Press, ushered in with the arrival of strong and ubiquitous government in the person of Rižā Khān, who in 1925 founded a new dynasty to replace that of the Qājārs, when he was declared Shah. Thus began the Pahlavī Era. The military strength he had painstakingly levied for the purpose of gradually subordinating the whole country and all its diverse elements to his command, combined with his eagle eye and capacity to overawe, if not terrify, his compatriots, imposed fresh patterns and, on the positive side, a new sense of purpose on his people. A renewed sense of national consciousness and pride was fostered. A process of the rebuilding of a nation was inaugurated, not unlike that which Kamal Atatürk was forcing

[57] Mustaufī, vol. III, pp. 616–17. [58] Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature*, p. 386.
[59] Mustaufī, *op. cit.*, pp. 616–17.

upon the Turkish nation. The drive had begun, to fashion an Iran that would match its urgent realization that salvation lay in making itself an integrated, independent entity from which international respect could not be withheld.

The number of newspapers published between 1925 and 1941, during Riżā Shāh's reign, declined from some one hundred and fifty to only fifty by 1940,[60] but the two published in the capital, the morning *Īrān* and the evening *Iṭṭilāʿāt*, became dominant and survived. *Īrān* was established in the 1880s, but it was its new version of 1295s/1915–16, and particularly the period of Majīd Muvaqqar's control of it from 1316s/1937, that reflected the aspirations of the new Iran of the 1930s. In the month of Shahrīvar, 1316s (September–October 1937), its article, "The Newspaper's Influence on the Life of the People", expressed the boosting of the national morale that was characteristic of the time. The newspaper's rôle as a cultural guide and source of reliable information for the man-in-the-street was emphasized, as was the importance of modern-style technology and professionalism. A daily paper had to become the daily fare of "every family in the capital and the provinces". Implicit in this was the assumption that a new type of urban middle-class was coming into existence, which no longer took religious and classical literary teaching as its sufficient guide; but the level of illiteracy and remoteness of the rural masses lead to the assumption that those *Īrān* addressed itself to were a limited section of the population.[61]

The *Iṭṭilāʿāt* ("News" or "Information") referred to is the important evening paper under ʿAbbās Masʿūdī, founded in Tehran in 1925. After *Īrān*'s exhortatory article on the civic value of newspapers, the following month *Iṭṭilāʿāt* published an item on "The Press and the Book", according to which these were the two most effective elements for transforming the "ideas and destiny" of a nation and guiding it "towards perfection and progress". They were, so to speak, "the school, to be considered the most efficacious for changing the conceptions of adults and forming their minds". Books and periodicals were "the sole bond and only intermediary . . . between the populace and the élite: the only instrument at the disposal of the educated and learned to sway men's minds and teach them their private and public duties".

At the abdication of Riżā Shāh in 1941, the number of papers had declined under rigorous prohibition of topics disliked by the government. Yet, besides the establishment of several important ones at the outset of a reign which had certainly given hope to many of the younger generation, the circulation of individual papers and magazines greatly increased. So also did the number of

[60] Elwell-Sutton, "The Press", p. 209. [61] Lescot, p. 261.

provincial subscribers to prestigious papers like *Īrān* and *Iṭṭilāʿāt* from Tehran. Eventually sixty percent of their issues were purchased in the provinces.[62] Machinery was modernized and *Iṭṭilāʿāt*, which began as one sheet, was extended to eight.

So far periodicals have not been treated separately. It will have become apparent that many of the journals listed as newspapers were a cross between periodicals and what are commonly called newspapers. Also, the periodical or review developed later. When they did, they were generally more literary than political in content. Dr Khānlarī cites *Bahār* ("Spring") as the first "literary magazine", which appeared in 1320/1902–3 under the direction of its almost sole contributor, Yūsuf Iʿtiṣāmī, whose articles included biographies of the famous, literary pieces, translations of European poetry, short stories and moralizing and sociological items. It lasted a year, but was revived in 1920–1. The description of its contents at once suggests to the student of 20th-century Persian letters this journal's pioneering significance, to which Dr Khānlarī attests.[63] Not the least of its influence lay in exemplifying a simple, fluent style which, although it showed signs of European sources, became a model for modern Persian writing. The introduction of European poets through the medium of translation was not lost on a younger generation of Iranian poets, as will be noticed below.

Before returning to the *Kāva* enterprise in Berlin it is appropriate to mention a precursor planted in Iranian soil in the successor to the first phase of *Bahār*: the literary review *Dānishkada* of 1336/1918. It was associated with an anjuman of the same name for the encouragement of learning and letters. *Dānishkada*, "Temple of Knowledge", stated that its aims included spreading the literary spirit and "establishing a new policy for Iranian literature", the style and genres of which were to be revised. While ancient masters would be treated with respect, new styles related to modern social requirements would be fostered.

When in January 1920 the new series *Kāva* replaced the wartime politically preoccupied and polemical *Kāva*, Taqīzāda in a leading article dissociated the new publication from the old. For it was not to be devoted to anything other than "scientific, literary and historical articles".[64] In phrases which he recanted forty years later,[65] Sayyid Ḥasan Taqīzāda declared the absolute need for Iran's europeanization. What he called "false patriotism" must be set aside in complete submission to the principles of European civilization. His opinion was that the best way of accomplishing this would be "the publication in Iran of translations

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 262. [63] *Nukhustīn Kungira*, p. 139. [64] Browne, *Literary History* IV, p. 485.
[65] Āryanpūr, vol. II, p. 232, n. 3.

of a whole series of the most important European books *in plain and simple language*" (italics added). Here was a harking back to the earlier stylistic advocacy of Iʿtiṣāmī; also a portent of United-States-sponsored translation projects, when in the 1950s translations of western classics were commissioned under the auspices of the Franklin Institute.

The new *Kāva* magazine contained articles of a scholarly content which gives them a perennial value, especially in the field, not of explaining the bases of the models European culture was supposed to supply for Iran's enlightenment, but of research into Persian literature. As for the example European civilization was expected to set, Taqīzāda later confessed that he had been carried away by his fervour for it, but the articles just alluded to in fact demonstrate that the underlying intention was really to adopt the western scholarly and research methods, which had already been eminently applied by European scholars to Persian literature and philology as well as to ancient Iranian history.

Dānishkada's editor, Malik al-Shuʿarā Bahār, followed its demise, in spite of its eager acceptance, after only a year with another weekly periodical, *Nau Bahār*, "The Fresh Spring", in 1922–3. Politics were not banished from its pages, but neither were translations of European stories and poems, and also original historical studies. Some time earlier Vaḥīd Dastgirdī (d. 1942), the editor of the works of the poet Niẓāmī, had founded the review *Armaghān*, "Keepsake", which was so extensively taken-up with classical Persian poetry that it remains a useful source of reference for the serious student of a large and remarkably rich canon. Less conservative modernists criticized this review as backward looking, but, as at the outset of this Chapter Ṣadr Hāshimī was seen to suggest, such periodicals tried to withstand the tests imposed by the new reign, and introduced names that were later to become celebrated as those of historians, poets in their own right, critics and preservers of Iran's literary heritage: those of Saʿīd Nafīsī and Majīd Muvaqqar, for example, besides Bahār and Vaḥīd. Literary reviews also appeared in Shīrāz, *Pasargād* ("Pasargadae") and *Sapīda Dam* ("Aurora"), Rasht and other provincial centres.[66]

P.N. Khānlarī, speaking with voice of a young poet and intellectual at the 1946 Congress of Iranian Writers, regrets the tendency of these literary periodicals to concentrate on literary history and the rediscovery of ancient masterpieces at the expense of innovation in a modern idiom. Yet he concedes that such diversions were practically all that editors could safely pursue in a period of censorship. Even the citing of classical literature could mean trouble:

[66] Rypka, pp. 382–3, 401–4.

publication of anything regarded as likely to excite a mood of pessimism or nostalgia for a past tarnished with mystical contemplation and passive quietism was prohibited. *Mihr*, "The Sun", was impounded in 1937–8 and thenceforward until Riżā Shāh's abdication in 1941 literary reviews ceased with the exception of the government sponsored *Īrān-i Imrūz*, "Iran Today", as much as anything else a vehicle for propaganda photographs. From early in the modern period Iran showed itself as adept in photography as it did in the art of caricature. After the First World War, photographic newspaper and magazine illustration was a feature of the Press and the example of the British *Picture Post* appears to have been copied. *Īrān-i Imrūz* did, however, also print some social and literary essays, but sufficiently discreetly for its editor not to upset his good relations with the vigilant authorities.[67]

After Riżā Shāh's departure, the most important reviews to emerge were first of all Khānlarī's *Sukhan* ("The Word") in 1327/1942–3, which was of a quality and, after an early pause, continuity reminiscent, in its significance as a literary periodical, of *Scrutiny* in the United Kingdom, and which in 1986, in the post-revolution era, permission has been granted to reprint as a literary reference series of outstanding value. For years it provided publishing scope for young writers and poets; also for scholarly discussion on textual, grammatical and philological problems as well as topics in Comparative Literature. Its office in Tehran was an informal meeting place for established and aspiring literati, and students of Persian from abroad. Many academic and editorial projects were first mooted and planned there. ʿAbbās Iqbāl (d. 1334/1955) the historian's *Yādgār* ("Memorial") was issued for literary and historical researches, and *Āyanda* ("The Future"), for political and social affairs. In 1956–7 the galaxy received the addition of *Rāhnamā-yi Kitāb*, "Guide to Books". It is edited by Iran's foremost bibliographer, Īraj Afshār, and cited by Vera Kubíčková as the culmination of modern Iranian efforts in bibliography and textual documentation in relation to literary studies.[68]

The end of what writers and the Press termed the era of the dictatorship, *zamān-i diktātūrī*, came when the British and Russians entered Iran in August 1941 and Riżā Shāh abdicated on 16 September. A period of freedom began which may be said to have lasted, although always subject to some restraints, until the Muṣaddiq era, 1951 to 1953. Such freedom for the expression of new ideas in literature, with the zest which the novel sense of liberation from government

[67] Kamshad, p. 183; *Nukhustīn Kungira*. [68] Rypka, pp. 403–4.

"guidance" brought with it, has never been part of the Iranian intellectual and artistic experience since those years between 1941 and 1951. Yet it took some months at the beginning for editors and writers to become adjusted to the paradoxical situation of a freedom from Riżā Shāh's requirements, combined with the presence of Occupying Powers, whose own views on what might and might not be printed had to be tested.[69] L.P. Elwell-Sutton records that the Press stayed neutral in tone until the end of 1941. The only new papers were consequent upon the return from exile of Zain al-ʿĀbidīn Rāhnamā, the original editor of *Īrān*, which he resumed so that Majīd Muvaqqar moved to found another paper, *Mihr-i Īrān* ("Sun of Iran"), on the same day as Rāhnamā issued *Īrān* in a new format, 19 December 1941. Both papers were moderate.

A portent of the vigour, often combined with irresponsibility, of the Press of the future was *Iqdām* ("Endeavour"). It had been started in 1921. In January 1942 it reappeared under its original editor, the Islamic polemicist and fighter ʿAbbās Khalīlī. He was the enemy of the British and of foreign invaders of Islam, whoever they might be. He made *Iqdām* a thorn in the side of the Occupying Powers and attacked the Tripartite Treaty by which the Russians and British wished to regulate with Iran the terms and duration of the Occupation. *Iqdām* set the politically violent tone of a host of papers which soon began to indulge more in vituperative polemics and name-calling than in news reporting. Their parochialism might be attributed to three factors. First of all there were wartime restrictions on the communication of much factual information at an international level. Combined with this limitation was the Allies' preference for slanting facts in favour of the aims of their own propaganda. Secondly there was the Iranian authorities' nervousness lest they offend the Occupying Powers, combined with political uncertainty and lack of confidence after over a decade of inaction under Riżā Shāh's one-man rule. Moreover, the government was confronted with inflation, food and material shortages, and all the economic dislocations and political distortions consequent upon foreign occupation and intervention, with the arrival in Iran of numbers of British, Russian and United States officers and men. Thirdly older politicians, long deprived of scope for action and the exercise of patronage, were eager to obtain power again. Under a young and weak sovereign, Muḥammad Riżā Pahlavī, they strove to re-establish themselves. As a result factions became centred on certain individuals. Groupings, often ephemeral and not deserving the name of political parties, were formed and claimed media support. Hence a large number of often equally

69 See Elwell-Sutton's articles listed in the bibliography.

ephemeral newspapers were issued. Although there was plenty of political discussion and the contents of these papers were passed by word of mouth among a people always ready to discuss politics and not lacking proneness to fantasize about them, still only ten to fifteen percent of the population could read. Therefore circulation was frequently exceedingly small, and there was inadequate finance for newspapers to purchase the services of international agencies. The Pārs News Agency had by 1944 been established as part of the Department of Press and Propaganda and, since they had no alternative, was used by the many papers which could not afford a news service of their own, but it was a poor substitute for international agencies and its information was generally late arriving.[70]

Apart from major papers, most had a circulation under 5,000 and sometimes as low as 500. There were papers sustained almost entirely by blackmail. This should not be taken to mean that certain civilized restraints went unobserved in a land where the individual's privacy is respected, perhaps all the more because so much of life seems to be lived in public. However scurrilous, it was rare for comments to be made in the Press on a person's private life and morality. Iranians were highly political in the 1940s, but the moral censure which has become a feature of Iranian life since 1979 was not prominent. Fantasy related to a mythology of politics, which was not always as far from the truth as superficially it seemed to be, was commonplace; cant and hypocrisy were not.

Attempts were made to reactivate the Department of Press and Propaganda left over from the former reign. If an active director, such as the writer and thinker Ibrāhīm Khwāja Nūrī of the moderate ʿAdālat (Justice) Party, tried to instil responsibility and professionalism into the Press, and discrimination in its readers, the cry of "Censorship" arose in a world thirsty for liberty. Such a director soon had to relinquish his post. When Khwāja Nūrī did, his dismissal, early in 1944, entailed that of the prime minister who had had the temerity to appoint him. That this Press, in spite of its state of, in Elwell-Sutton's phrase, "ferment and turmoil", had bite was due to ineptitude on the part of personally ambitious politicians and, perhaps more than anything else, to terror of what a free press, which few had the strategy to cajole or control, might do or say, particularly when food shortages and other ills provided it with a great deal of ammunition.

The Martial Law Regulation of August 1941 gave the Military Governor of Tehran powers to suppress papers for anything which he considered "interfer-

[70] Elwell-Sutton, "The Press", p. 213.

ence" with government functions. These ill-defined powers were not unsparingly used. During the December 1942 bread riots, the prime minister, Qavām al-Salṭana, suppressed all the Tehran papers. To suppress all of them obviated an adroit procedure Iranian editors practised when only a few organs were banned. They promptly resumed publication under another title. The clamorous but threatened character of this period of Iranian journalism schooled its operatives in a variety of devices to circumvent suppression and restrictions on comment derogatory to the Occupying Powers and carefully monitored by them. The latter were referred to by soubriquets such as "the crow, eagle and bear" or "our northern and southern neighbours".

After the years of dictatorship nobody wanted censorship or the frequent banning of papers. Nevertheless successive prime ministers had to be wary of the Allies' susceptibilities and to avoid inviting further interference in domestic affairs. Efforts were made to amend the Press Law embodied in the original Constitution of 1906–7. So sensitive was the issue that two Press Law bills had to be withdrawn in face of stiff Majlis opposition. After his dramatic ban on the Tehran Press following the December bread riots in 1942, Qavām had a government sheet published, called *Akhbār-i Rūz*, "The Day's News", which continued until 2 February 1943. At the same time he seized the opportunity to get an amended Press Law passed on 24 December 1942. Its main purpose was to ensure the licensing of newspapers by the government, and that individuals should only be licence-holders for one paper, and, in particular, that to obtain a licence they should be able to show specific financial and educational qualifications. Qavām himself did not lack interest in letters. He had as a youth been one of the aristocrats involved in the Constitutional Movement, for the documents of which his calligraphic skills had been employed. Thus he well understood editors and the Press. In 1946, during the crises over the Northern Oil and the Āẕarbāījān separatist movement, he proved himself the one Iranian statesman capable of manipulating the Press until, the time of crisis having passed, he fell from power.

Neither the amended Press Law nor the efforts of the more responsible men in the newspaper business succeeded in raising standards or bringing order into a medium which was in effect a Hydra. Responsible proprietors and editors (they were generally but not necessarily the same person), attempted to organize themselves into a Press Union, founded in August 1942, but, apart from the outstanding *Iṭṭilāʿāt* organization and its rival, *Kayhān*'s, there was nothing in the way of major Press groupings controlled by a limited number of rich and influential individuals associated with an equally limited number of well orga-

nized, clearly defined and viable political parties. Some rich men might find reasons for erratically funding a newspaper or two, but the reasons were generally either political in the sense that they wished to strengthen their power-base, or personal in pursuit of a vendetta, or a combination of both in a situation where the concept of civic responsibility had become atrophied since the first days of the Constitutional Movement. There was a dearth of those who perceived the usefulness of organizing and financing a large newspaper and publishing corporation. The Press had not yet been able, due in large measure to lack of freedom, to mature into something which an entrepreneur could regard as a business operation. Newsprint, carefully controlled by the Allies, was in short supply, as paper for all purposes has again become in Iran at the time of writing; but in any event, had the conception of Press monopolies occurred to businessmen, no pragmatic Iranian investor would have felt drawn to a field catering only for a literate few.

The 1942 Press Union gradually became a clique of the left and an instrument of the communist Tūda Party, after the Union had been more or less taken over by the Freedom Front, formed in July 1943. The left, and notably the Tūda Party, did foster a Press which showed signs of both responsibility and organization, but the Tūda was one of the few political parties to show similar features in the sphere of party formation; it had motives above the merely personal.

A new and less controversial Iranian Press Association came into being in June 1946. It prohibited party membership for members of the Association and became affiliated to the International Organization of Journalists in January 1947. Among the Association's founders only two are mentioned by Elwell-Sutton as leftist, although their political allegiances were, to say the least, fickle. They both represented significant Khurāsānian interests, those of the Tafażżulīs and the Iqbāls, families not averse to having a foot in more than one camp, as was prudent. The outline of the history of their two papers, as given by Elwell-Sutton,[71] provides a clear example of how members of the same clique, in this instance initially that of Paikār ("Battle") Party supporters, might combine over one or more newspapers, to give themselves a wider spread, opportunities to reflect variable political positions through having more than one organ, and the possession of alternative papers if one were suppressed. Needless to say, the subterfuges which became a feature of this journalism would be quite evident to those who happened to be in power. The dignity of the Press was in the meantime seriously damaged.

[71] Elwell-Sutton, "The Iranian Press", pp. 80, 99.

Polarization between the left and right became more sharply defined after 1944 when Soviet interest in competing with American and British oil prospectors for Iran's "northern" oil became obvious. The prime minister, Muḥammad Sāʿid, admitted before the Majlis in August that he had seen representatives of the first two nations for talks about oil concessions.[72] Certain newspapers came out violently against Sāʿid and in favour of the U.S.S.R. Soviet propaganda was, especially as reported by Lenczowski, an eye-witness and close to the workings of the Tehran Press, both more subtle and more pervasive than either the British or American. It had an impact on the Press and on literature in general, as the 1946 First Congress of Iranian Writers shows. This major literary event was organized under Soviet auspices and most welcome to Iranian literary aspirants of the day. It marked the coming of age of modern Persian letters.

During the War, the British, Russians, Poles and Americans published papers and magazines in their own languages and in Persian. Elwell-Sutton lists seven papers in Polish and a monthly bulletin issued by the Polish Information Service in French.[73] The French-language *Journal de Téhéran*, however, dated back to 1934. Its editor was Javād Masʿūdī, the brother of the head of the *Iṭṭilāʿāt* organization, ʿAbbās Masʿūdī. It chiefly depended on the Agence France Presse for foreign news. Although the French Embassy supplied feature articles, *Journal de Téhéran* was no wartime product of any foreign propaganda machine.

In the context of the latter, an Anglo-American publication, started in the summer of 1941 by Doubleday Doran of New York and Hodder and Stoughton in London, deserves mention. It purported to be a literary, scientific and economics magazine and, called *Rūzgār-i Nau* ("The New Age"), was published quarterly in Persian and profusely illustrated. The covers bore sumptuous reproductions of Persian miniatures. While it was a wartime "propaganda" enterprise, it was helped by advertisements placed by important industrial concerns, and was respected by Iranian men of letters of the time. The contents included articles on oriental studies, and such social topics as public health and hospital organization.

Apart from a type of journalism like *Rūzgār-i Nau*'s, published abroad for import into Iran, in Iran itself there were foreign-sponsored pioneering efforts in a kind of newspaper offshoot which had a lasting impact and furnished modern Iran with a new journalistic feature. Magazines specially designed for women readers and for children were to have many later descendants; by the decade ending in 1974, Masʿūd Barzīn's comment on the "The Woman of the

[72] G. Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran 1918–1948*, pp. 216 ff.

[73] Elwell-Sutton, "The Iranian Press", pp. 103–4.

Day" (*Zan-i Rūz*), a Tehran weekly of a 110 pages, then in its tenth year, was that it was one of the most successful magazines in the capital.[74] As with other aspects of the Press, the same decade occasions Barzīn's observation on the demise of a number of journals or sections of them devoted to children, the regular papers for infants published by the *Iṭṭilāʿāt* and *Kayhān* organizations for example; but still the Ministry of Education was keenly producing separate journals catering for different age-groups. At the same time, *Kayhān* and *Iṭṭilāʿāt*'s commercial concern had prompted a move in the opposite direction towards readership through weeklies addressed to more than one generation, albeit with the accent on the young. Perhaps these two organizations' problem in the field of journals for children was compounded, while the Education Ministry's effort in the same field was inspired and supported, by the intervention of the American Franklin Publishing Organization under whose joint aegis with the Ministry the *Paik* series for the young, graded according to age and school class levels, was produced. Finance and expertise were thus introduced into this field with which it was difficult for other organizations to compete, even those of *Iṭṭilāʿāt* and *Kayhān*. The *Paik* venture was underway by 1962 and expanded, to include young men and women, in 1972. A year later it reported an annual production of over a million copies of the various parts in the series of excellently produced papers.[75]

The development of journals bearing on youthful readers from the late 1950s was natural in response to the predominantly youthful element arising in the population as Iran headed for the 1979 revolution, in which the literate were seen to be vastly outnumbered by illiterate compatriots, with whom they nevertheless joined forces. Also consonant with this emphasis on youth, as well as with a traditional Iranian preoccupation with development of a strong physique, was the production of magazines devoted to physical training, weight-lifting and the like. By the early 1970s, however, diversionary entertainment, stories, the cinema and profiles of stars and singers, sport and other, so to speak, "circus" topics had almost completely monopolized the weeklies which proliferated in accordance with their increasing popularity among an increasingly but superficially sophisticated populace in the capital. The capital had learnt the modern and alien capacity for being bored. Constructive political action was denied. Distractions and an evanescent glamour were sought in the capital of a nation whose guilt for the betrayal of traditional values was shortly to be expiated; in Iran there has always been a far deeper and more ancient

[74] Barzīn, *Maṭbūʿāt-i Īrān*, Lists of publications. [75] Barzīn, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

sophistication than that to which reference has just been made. Of the weeklies here referred to all but one were produced in Tehran. Meanwhile, *Raushanfikr*, "The Enlightened Mind", had collapsed; apart from *Sukhan*, the only more serious periodicals and papers were medical, health and pharmaceutical journals, the *Tehran Economist* and the "Bourse", but, significantly in the 1970s, there was a decline in the treatment of economics and commerce, even in the pages set aside for these topics in the two major newpapers. The weekly *Bāzār-i Khāvar-i Mīyāna* ("Middle East Market") closed altogether. The weekly *Tehran Economist* only survived with a struggle. Scepticism about the "economic miracles" no doubt militated against intelligent people's interest in such publications.

The only journal devoted to these matters which continued to command confidence in the decade 1964–74 was the daily *Burs* ("Bourse"), because it gave up-to-date economic and trade data objectively and not from one side only, supplying businessmen with the information they required, without telling them, the heirs of one of the most adroit trading nations in the world, what they should be doing.[76] It was read in the provinces as well as Tehran, its sales being eighteen percent in the north, fifteen percent in the east, forty-five percent in the south and one percent in the western part of the country.[77] As Barzīn comments in another context, it is interesting how Āẕarbāījān, once so prominently vigorous in the promotion of the Press, had gradually relinquished its former rôle; but before returning to the Press in northwestern Iran, one field in which some sign of revival was noticeable half a decade before the revolution needs mentioning.

Barzīn maintains that in comparison with the years before 1964 religious publications, *nashrīyāt-i maẕhabī*, became markedly active between 1964 and 1974. He lists the causes of this revival as the appearance of better educated religious classes, who, through such media as the radio and television, were becoming better acquainted with the world; and a better informed Iranian youth, which meant that religious literature had to cater for a readership requiring rational arguments and demonstrations of religious verities acceptable to minds aware of modern sociological and scientific discussion. He lists among the religious journals of the time, which took their beginning from a small start in Qum, *al-Fikr al-Islāmī*, *Tārīkh al-Islām*, *Dars-hā'ī az Maktab-i Islām*, *Sitāra-yi Islām*, *Nidā-yi Ḥaqq*, and *Nasl-i Nau* (*Payām-i Shādī barā-yi Nasl-i Nau*), the last meaning, "The New Generation (Good News for the New Generation"), a title of which the significance is clear. But he lists separately the *Maʿārif-*

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 135. [77] *Loc. cit.*

i Islāmī ("Islamic Teaching"), published by the government Endowments Organization, and *Maqālāt va Barrasī-hā* ("Articles and Researches"), published by the research team of the Faculty of Divinity and Islamic Teaching in Tehran. These publications must have been known to be "associated with institutions and not independent".[78] Thus Barzīn isolates religious revivalist literature which had a sponsorship other than that of the main religious Establishment based on Qum. However, a journal like *al-Fikr al-Islāmī* ("Islamic Thought") was published periodically in Tehran, and in Arabic, while *Tārīkh al-Islām* ("History of Islam") was also produced in Tehran, but more as an annual, the depth and seriousness of the contents of which appeal only to the highly educated. Its first number appeared in the winter of 1973. *Nasl-i Nau*, in Barzīn's opinion the religious publication which "tries most to make topics conform to everyday realities", was printed, with an illustrated cover in colour, in the press of the Islamic Propaganda Institute in Qum. Aimed at the young with the purpose of attracting them to the truths of religion, its editorial board, headed by Ḥasan Sharīʿatmadārī, took care to elucidate Arabic terms and phrases, as also those in other tongues.

In 1945, between the end of November and mid-December, a so-called "National Government of Iranian Āẕarbāījān" was established, under Jaʿfar Pīshavārī, followed by Qāẓī Muḥammad's "Kurdish People's Government" over an area of about fifty miles radius centered on the town of Mahābād. The Democrats' régimes in Āẕarbāījān and the Iranian Kurdish region were thus inaugurated. By the end of 1946 these Soviet chaperoned, left-wing autonomist régimes had collapsed and Soviet patronage was withdrawn. The Iranian central authorities proceeded to eradicate any traces of Āẕarbāījānī and Kurdish separatism. Students were reported to have of their own volition destroyed textbooks the Democrat régime had supplied in the local Turkish dialect instead of Persian.[79] Meanwhile in Mahābād, the "Persian authorities prohibited teaching in the Kurdish language, closed the Kurdish printing-press, and publicly burnt all the Kurdish books they could find".[80] In the ensuing drive against the Tūda Party, its headquarters in Tehran were destroyed and its newspapers, *Rahbar* and *Ẓafar*, banned.

Perhaps the surprising extent to which the Press declined after the Second World War in Tabrīz, the cradle of Iranian reform and journalism, can in large measure be attributed to the collapse of the separatist attempt it also cradled, but

[78] *Ibid.*, p. 129.

[79] George Kirk, *The Middle East 1945–1950* (Survey of International Affairs 1939–1946, Oxford, 1954), p. 82. [80] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

which ended in disgrace and disillusionment. In the post-Muṣaddiq decade, 1954 to 1964, the provincial Press expanded to a total of some ninety publications, eighty-four newspapers and six magazines. Khurāsān held the lead, which it kept in the next decade, although the provincial total fell to seventy-three. Tehran province came next with nine to Khurāsān's fifteen, then, between 1964 and 1974, seven to Khurāsān's eighteen. Fārs, with the new Pahlavī University in Shīrāz, and Iṣfahān and Gīlān came next, but the two divisions into which Āẕarbāījān had been divided, as West and East Āẕarbāījān, came lower and were taken with Hamadān, Māzandarān, Kurdistān, Luristān, Sīstān, Baluchistān and the Gulf Ports, to give small totals below half-a-dozen. Barzīn comments on the decline in the early 1970s of the provincial Press as a whole.[81] Two or three organs which survived, at least until the declaration of a One-Party State when the Shah established the Rastākhīz ("Resurrection") Party in 1975, were taken over and supported by one of the two parties that were experimented with from the mid-1950s in an attempt to impose a two-party system with a "loyal" opposition on the British model. Huvaida's Irān Novīn Party, New Iran Party, the one in government, sponsored papers in three provincial centres and the party of opposition, Asad-Allāh ʿAlam's Mardum Party, People's Party, gave not unenlightened sponsorship to one or two papers. Even this by no means entirely irresponsible journalism which the two parties promoted on a small scale disappeared after 1975. Notably, one of the few provincial papers to emerge or re-emerge after 1964 was the *Payām-i Shādī* ("Good News") in the religious centre, Qum, while a *Payām-i Millī*, of Lāhījān, Gīlān, ("National Herald") was likewise one of the few papers to appear in the decade which saw the closure of sixty-one provincial publications.

The decline in the provincial Press is in the first place attributable to the increasing power, more effective distribution methods than were usual, and the running of provincial pages specially set-up for different regions, which characterized the Tehran "Twin Giants", the *Ghūlhā-yi Duqulū*, *Iṭṭilāʿāt* and *Kayhān*. After thirteen years of intense rivalry, these two papers, in the words of the uninhibited weekly *Khwāndanīhā*'s director and outspoken commentator, ʿAlī Aṣghar Amīrānī (Number 72, year s. 1334/1954–5), became identical in the mid-fifties when they combined to form a partnership with which none could compete. They had the plant, experience and financial ability that enabled them to become a publishing empire without precedent in Iran, and to survive, although after the virtual merger of their editorial policies the circulation of

[81] *Op. cit.*, p. 174.

both fell from figures of as high, for *Kayhān*, as 120,000, for *Iṭṭilāʿāt*, 70,000, to 40,000, in a land which in 1961–2 numbered only some 4,353,688 literate people in a population of thirty million odd.[82]

In the second place, in common with all the Iranian Press from the late 1950s, the provincial papers' decline was accelerated by improvement in radio coverage of news, comment and, poaching on ground greatly favoured by the producers and readers of weekly and monthly magazines, stories as well as plays; and, in the first instance in Tehran and Khūzistān, the development of television. The disadvantage these two media imposed on the Press in a country where so many could not read, but where the radio became ubiquitous, is too obvious to need emphasizing. As implied in the first sentence of this paragraph, the problem of decline was not restricted to the provincial Press. Masʿūd Barzīn discusses it already in his 1966 publication, the first of his two valuable books on the decades 1955–65 and 1965–75 of the Iranian Press. Reasons for it, which he elicited by questioning a sample of readers, include items conducive to a thesis concerning the part played by decline in the quality and the very nature of the Press and its receptivity by the people, in preparing the way for the revolution of 1979. While he himself adds comment on the competition from radio and television, and that occasioned by a "continual increase in the number of . . . foreign papers and journals imported", by an increase in cheap pocket paperback books, and even by the diversion public lotteries introduced, his response from those he questioned pinpoints at least three issues which demonstrate the serious degree to which, in the decades between the fall of Muṣaddiq and the Iranian Revolution, the Press had forfeited the confidence of its readers; ceased to be an effective critique of a government which was aided in controlling the Press by its readers' general subservience; and had vitiated its chances of being a Press to mould public opinion into an independent corrective or guide for the government.

Barzīn's first three responses were that the Press, and especially the monthly magazines, had too low a level of contents; that readers were too sceptical not to be reluctant to accept what was published, especially in newspapers; and that the Press, especially the daily, contained too much propaganda on behalf of different cabinets and office-holders, while smaller papers tended largely to subsist on the revenue afforded by government announcements. Another response was that papers showed too little concern for the people's difficulties in a society burdened by rising inflation and bewildered by over-rapid changes, the benefits of which were not immediately apparent to a populace whose indigence was

[82] Barzīn, *Sairī*, p. 10, n. 1; but cf. G. Lenczowski (ed.), *Iran under the Pahlavis*, pp. 304 and 313 ff.

compounded by new taxes and to whom new policies, while much lauded, were inadequately explained. Also, it was said that many lacked the means to buy newspapers and magazines, the sharing of which was common. The personal views of editors were not what people wished always to read: a natural unwillingness to read the views, interposed with discussion of public affairs, of men not highly trusted added to the generally cynical attitude which, after the events of Muṣaddiq's régime, began to take root. The Press ceased to be popular.

It ceased to be relevant to the needs of a majority in whom it had, ironically, aroused expectations of entertaining comment, if not guidance. In a paper like *Khwāndanīhā* ("Things Worth Reading") social and political comment, although often witheringly contemptuous, was serious, until the day Amīrānī fell into disgrace and public figures were spared forever the terror of his editorials, "The Bare Facts". The Press also ceased to express aspirations in which the majority might believe: too many promises had been made without materializing, to promote universal trust. Independent journals, among which *Khūsha* ("Gleanings") might be named as a more literary than political magazine, while *Bāmdād* ("Dawn") and *Khwāndanīhā* could keep the political personalities of the day on their toes and voice criticism of prominent people, had disappeared by the early seventies, in spite of having enjoyed a wide readership, especially *Bāmdād.*

In the event, so had political personalities with influence disappeared by the last Pahlavī decade. It may be said that only one remained, the Shah. He, followed by his family, the Army and the U.S.A., was number one on the, presumably unwritten, list of persons and matters which, according to a principal leader-writer of *Iṭṭilāʿāt* in a private communication to the author in 1955, had been given to the newspaper as a guide to whom and what were never to receive adverse comment. Disobedience to this type of directive to the Press threatened with ruin the heavily financed corporation of the *Iṭṭilāʿāt* which ʿAbbās Masʿūdī had established. When Dr Miṣbāḥzāda's *Kayhān* became virtually a partner in this corporation, *Kayhān* lost its *Guardian* style of a mildly critical organ as it too conformed. Licensees and editors knew the rumours about the cruel death by torture and burning which Karīmpūr Shīrāzī had suffered after Muṣaddiq's fall, during whose premiership he had criticized a member of the Shah's family in his paper, *Shūrish* ("Insurrection").

In February 1948 journalists and others had been shocked by the assassination of Muḥammad Masʿūd Qummī, the licensee of *Mard-i Imrūz* ("Today's Man"), a highly critical and many times suppressed newspaper, the murder of whose leading spirit was believed to be on the Shah's instructions. Only in 1985,

during interrogation of a leading member of the Tūda Party, was it stated that it was not the throne which instigated this murder, but the Tūda Party with the purpose of damaging the throne and eliminating a strong critic of the government who was also deeply averse to the communism of the Tūda Party.[83]

By the 1960s the two dominant evening papers, *Iṭṭilāʿāt* and *Kayhān*, with their satellite magazines and extensive circulation and network of correspondents in the provinces, gave most space to foreign news, in the absence of scope for worthwhile comment on home affairs. Yet both papers developed impressive English-language papers and, for Iranian readers abroad, airmail editions which, however, evidence shows were little read by Iranian students. In style and efficiency these two enterprises brought Iranian journalistic production to a peak of excellence by the decade of the sixties, but it was a maturity attained at a time when circumstances were conspiring to emasculate it.

By the mid-seventies and the eve of the Iranian Revolution, the Persian Press can be seen to have begun to reflect the passivity which was the obverse of intense economic activity, especially after the change in control of oil pricing in 1973. The more articulate and educated preferred publicly to accept political conditions which in private they criticized. While a potentially influential number were seeking materially to profit from new economic opportunities, they declined to risk the dangers attendant upon opposition. That was left to dissident activists and became the property of terrorists.

Other causes, not least inflationary prices, might be cited for the decline of the Press, but the most significant was the growing disillusionment of the reading public and their lack of confidence in the future. Promises were beginning to appear illusory. While even periodicals devoted to sport and athletics declined in acceptance as they became regimented to serve the purposes of propaganda, an increase in glamorous magazines did not overcome Iranian scepticism. They were of obvious western provenance. They trivialized a journalism no longer addressed to those affairs which gravely concerned a host of people. Articles on such topics as the family, child-rearing, menus and cooking and so forth ignored the pressures under which many were living, and were impracticable for all but a very few. At the same time they might have made disillusionment the greater. They titillated the senses but also raised expectations there seemed little chance of gratifying. The traditional values in the idiom of which pre-1925 journals spoke, wherever produced and of whatever politics, were absent except from one or two religious journals, with a limited and

[83] *Iran Press Digest* v, no. 77 (8 July 1986), p. 8.

specialist audience. Only one genre, that of the story, saw an increase in demand, both in the Press and on the radio, during the period under review. Earlier there had been a strange tendency to use mainly translated stories or to make Persian originals appear to be of foreign origin by the expedient of naming characters with European names and giving a foreign location. Latterly this practice ceased and stories and characters were made Iranian.

The lack of political comment left room for the delivery of political messages by means other than the Press. The Iranian facility in adaptation ensured that messages could be delivered by means of the spoken word which, were they literate or not, the wearers of earphones could hear from cassettes imported from a religious dissident abroad, just as in the first years of the century newspapers had clandestinely been imported. It is an irony that Iran's failure to have a positive Press coincided with United States sponsorship of attempts to reform journalism and raise its standards. Aided by a Fulbright scheme, classes in Tehran University were opened in 1956, with a Professor imported from the U.S.A. The first four-year course finished in 1960, but there was not another until four years later.

Kayhān and *Iṭṭilāʿāt* began schools of journalism on their own and, although there seems to have been resistance in University circles to making such courses a recognized part of the academic programme, Dr Miṣbāḥzāda of *Kayhān* used his academic standing to foster them in conjunction with his newspaper. By 1964 some two hundred and thirty of the two major papers' journalists had undergone training, and both papers began a policy of employing academically qualified members of staff. Yet these efforts were out of line with the unsatisfactory realities of the status and pay of full-time and especially young journalists. Well-qualified people were not attracted to journalism as a profession.[84] Many combined journalism with other occupations and only the authors of stories, either serialized or separate, commanded appreciable fees. A revised Press Law was passed in 1965 and a journalists' Union became active in the struggle for betterment of the journalists' position.

Thus attempts were being made to introduce professionalism, but into a Press that had ceased to represent any Cause and which from early 1975 was deprived of such life as even the existence of two "official" political parties had bestowed on it. The classes which had used organs to boost their influence had long since retired from the arena and had other outlets for their energies. No forum for discussion and no Press to shape public opinion remained.

[84] Barzīn, *Sairī*, ch. 10.

LITERATURE

A survey of the development of journalism in Iran during the last hundred and eighty years includes a great deal about the development of its literary activity in general during the same period. It will have become evident that much of the journalism was what would commonly be considered literature in the creative and aesthetic sense, and that the development of the first provided a new vehicle for the second. Poets, who in the past had enjoyed a court patronage that was impaired in the Safavid epoch and never fully resumed its rôle in the encouragement of verse, used the columns of the journals they often themselves produced, for publication of their poems, but the modern age has chiefly been that of prose, revived and reformed as a more suitable vehicle than verse for modern political and social concerns. The impact of the West made writers, conscious of Iran's humiliation at its hands, seek to discover the secret of its power in its cultural and institutional manifestations. That they did not look for deficiencies in their own culture was due less to the blindness of pride than to the legitimate assumption that Iran's ancient culture, the subject of study in Europe and of the admiration of Goethe, was in some respects superior to the West's. Yet, on a more pragmatic level, it was with the West that they had to communicate and which they felt a practical necessity to emulate.

Until, in much more recent times, Iranian poets, chiefly under the innovatory but cautious, meditative and artistically warrantable influence of Nīmā-yi Yūshīj (1895–1959), began to contrive an escape from traditional forms, which was the more difficult because of that tradition's comprehensive power and hold on the whole nation, any attempt to adapt Persian poetics to modern times in anything but subject matter was avoided. Modern subjects continued to be expressed in traditional modes, but time-honoured, and also time-worn, imagery was discarded. A tradition of courtly poetry was, moreover, blended with a popular ballad and lampoon (*taṣnīf*) tradition, which had survived in Iran although, especially in Safavid times, many poets in the high classical tradition had fled to the princely courts of India. This blend is particularly evident in the verses of ʿIshqī (1894–1924), but neither he nor a host of his contemporary poets, who included Bahār (1880–1951), ventured seriously to break the traditional mould and thus to isolate themselves from a populace which, whether or not illiterate, was apt to know by heart many verses in the old form.[85]

Prose was not in the same way as verse the property of the entire nation, but

[85] See Ehsan Yarshater and Khosrow Golesorkhi on recent innovative poets' isolation in Ricks (ed.), *Critical Prespectives*, pp. 235, 244, 456.

of the learned, educated in the conventions of the chancellery and religious disputation, and unwilling to accept the vernacular without adornments derived from Arabic, the language of the learned and the religious classes. Prose traditions were not within the range of the illiterate. They were a barrier to that spreading of communication which, as has been observed, was an aim of reformers from the time of Amīr-i Kabīr. Prose was a field for adaptation in a way poetry was not. From the beginning of the modern period it was the purpose of writers to make it the property of the people. Fatḥ ʿAlī Ākhūndzāda, whose medium was Turkish and home in Tiflis, where the Russians had introduced the theatre and opera, decided that this could be achieved through drama spoken as people speak in real life. In 1873–4 Mīrzā Jaʿfar Qarājadāghī published Persian adaptations of Ākhūndzāda's plays in Tehran and proclaimed the same purpose. In 1882 one of the plays was published in England as a manual for learning colloquial Persian.[86]

In the late 1880s the *Siyāḥatnāma*, travel diary, of Ibrāhīm Beg began to appear. Another instalment appeared in 1907, from the *Ḥabl al-Matīn* Press in Calcutta. As it was a political satire on the state of Iran, it was printed abroad, the first part by its author, Zain al-ʿĀbidīn of Marāgha, in Cairo. In 1910 a further edition of the main parts of the work was issued in Calcutta, again as a manual for foreign students of Persian. Ironically, this satirical travel diary of a patriot's disillusionment on revisiting his ancestral land was in the genre of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's travel diaries, but it exploited more fully the idiom of the people and their aptitude for apposite verse citations, and was altogether more sophisticated than the royal travel diaries.

Also intended to teach students colloquial Persian was the first printed edition of, as is now known, Mīrzā Ḥabīb of Iṣfahān's skilful adaptation of Morier's picaresque romance, *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan*.[87] The translator, who belonged to the team of reformers and translators engaged on the Persian newspaper, *Akhtar*, in Istanbul, achieved what Bahār, in his study of Persian prose styles, considered a perfect combination of old and new stylistic conventions. This blending of "the simple and contrived" was, he thought, a masterpiece of the century.[88] It was also a political satire which Iranians accepted as such until it became known that it was not the invention of a compatriot but originated from what they regarded as an English author's skit on their ways.[89]

[86] W.H.D. Haggard and Guy Le Strange, *The Vazir of Lankoran* (London, 1882).

[87] See Kamshad, pp. 21–7; he proves that Aḥmad-i Rūḥī was *not* the translator (see p. 832 supra).

[88] *Sabk-shināsī* III, pp. 366–7.

[89] See D.C. Phillott's Introduction to his 1905 edition as a former Secretary of the Calcutta Board of Examiners in Persian. The Ḥabl al-Matīn Press in Calcutta issued another edition for the Iranian public in 1906, and another was printed in Bombay.

Zain al-ʿĀbidīn of Marāgha and Mīrzā Ḥabīb of Iṣfahān were followed, as pioneers in notable efforts to establish popular idiom as legitimate in literature, by Sayyid Muḥammad ʿAlī Jamālzāda with his collection of verbal caricatures and short stories in *Yakī Būd Yakī Nabūd*, itself a folk phrase equivalent to "Once upon a time". This collection was published in Berlin in 1921 and has several times been reprinted in Iran. Its first story, *Fārsī Shikar ast*, "Persian is Sugar", mimicked the various idioms characteristic of different types in the Iranian community. In his preface the author declared the intention to make Persian prose part of that "literary democracy" which those authors who had only written for "the learned and men of letters" had evaded. He called for the avoidance of *takalluf*, strained literary embellishment. The majority of subsequent writers have followed this call, even to the extent of risking allowing the use of sought-after colloquialisms itself to become a kind of *takalluf*; but naturally this criticism does not apply to the genuine artists among later writers.

Jamālzāda's father had been a popular preacher, the more forceful for his use of language which the people understood: their own.[90] Jamālzāda's abiding interest in it resulted in his dictionary of popular speech, the *Farhang-i Lughāt-i ʿĀmiyāna*. In the introduction he cites numerous examples from early classical authors to prove that words preserved in ordinary speech and which modern writers have retrieved for literature were unhestitatingly used by great artists before the literary language was corrupted by sometimes excessive arabicisation.

Ṣādiq Hidāyat, Ṣādiq Chūbak, Buzurg ʿAlavī and Jalāl Āl-i Aḥmad, to name the major innovators in prose between the 1930s and mid-1950s, were fully conversant with classical literature and the first two have mentioned a "Mirror for Princes", the prose-work, *Qābūsnāma*, written in 1082, as a model. Meanwhile, as for poetry, so splendidly did the ancient poets manipulate intricate traditional patterns of imagery and metre, that the degree to which their language was in fact colloquial is often obscured. Also, in the longer term, modern prose writers' innovation was less in language than in the subject-matter and genres of their works, although the return to the spoken language was a major distinguishing feature of their work.

Futhermore, in common with all modern writers, in prose and poetry, they were concerned with the individual conscience and the individual's plight under the pressures of the times, which were exacerbated for Iranians by the circumstances of a society undergoing transition and seldom free. Abstractions based

[90] Browne, *Persian Revolution*, p. 116.

on what might be beyond the terrestrial present were not primarily part of their stock-in-trade, although there were exceptions and great artists remained too Iranian not to reflect the universal in the particular. This reflection is, of course, the hallmark of great art, and Hidāyat and Chūbak both place episodes and characters in a timeless world reminiscent of that of the Persian miniature. They thus do what poets did before the art of the miniature came to maturity: provide in words the visual images and a translucent quality of environment which are inseparable from the Persian miniature. The principal character in Hidāyat's novella, *Būf-i Kūr*, "The Blind Owl", is himself a miniaturist. He paints the single miniature-style picture of a scene which comes to life to haunt him, as well as providing the only motif with which he decorates lacquer pen-boxes.

None of this means that these writers were unengaged by the sublunary world they lived in and found hard to bear. It was a world which, in Iran's modern political conditions, they could hardly escape unless, as Hidāyat did in 1951, they took their own lives or, like Jamālzāda, spent their lives abroad, as also Buzurg ʿAlavī, a Marxist, has done since 1953. 1953 was the year when the comparatively liberal period begun in 1941 ended. It was in this period that these writers came into their own. Hidāyat's words in his *Payām-i Kafkā*, "Message of Kafka", are eloquent on the damage done to the human spirit during the dictatorship of Riżā Shāh which ended in 1941. This essay was an introduction to a Persian translation, by Ḥasan Qāʾimīyān, of Kafka's *The Penal Colony*, published in 1947. Hidāyat depicts the negation of individual human dignity – in an age when Iranian writers were subordinating literary conventions and form to the service of individualistic expression – as being "the sign of our time that the dignity of the human personality has no place: the age is, as are its laws, impersonal, its heart as of stone . . . Yet on arrest, 'in the name of these laws', we die like dogs, neither executioner nor victim making a sound. Because he has to gasp for air all his life, panting for breath is the man of today's only way out."

Writers who succeeded in coming to terms with the period of Riżā Shāh were ʿAlī Dashtī and Muḥammad Ḥijāzī. The former, a journalist who founded the paper, *Shafaq-i Surkh*, "Red Twilight", in 1921, was imprisoned in the same year. He learnt a lesson, wrote his first book on his "Prison Days", and survived under the two Pahlavī Shahs as a fashionable novelist and writer of light-weight books about famous Persian poets, until after the 1979 revolution he died, saddened and harrassed after subjection to another ordeal by those who had just seized power from the second Pahlavī ruler. Buzurg ʿAlavī's encounter with the authorities, under the provisions of a law of 1931 against communists, was more serious than Dashtī's of 1921. ʿAlavī suffered confinement, which not all the

fifty-three men incarcerated with him survived, from 1937 until 1941. One of his most beautifully written works, in which he used to telling effect the music of the Persian tongue, is *Varaq-pārahā-yi Zindān*, "Scattered Pages from Prison". He has remained a serious writer, principally of short stories but also a novel and an epistolatory work of fiction, and will no doubt produce more.

Ḥijāzī was a man who not only survived under a régime suspicious of authors, but served as head of the Press section of Riżā Shāh's Organization for the Guidance of Thoughts – its actual name – and won a literary prize sponsored by this Shah's successor. Nevertheless, good judges respect this urbane novelist and essayist, who saw himself as an aloof Montaigne of the Iranian literary scene, for the well-poised diction through which he became an exemplary stylist of polite letters. He and Dashtī belonged to the school of Mushfiq Kāẓimī, Jahāngīr Jalīlī and Muḥammad Masᶜūd Dihātī, which used the novel to write about the rôle of women in an era when their unveiling, by Riżā Shāh's decree, had brought into the open the possibilities of their influence, as well as aspects of both their wiles and their degradation. Ḥijāzī was more concerned with female guile and depicted women in a selfish, petulant guise. Dashtī used them as romantic if disturbing objects of attraction for amorous philanderers in smart society. The others of this school were concerned with prostitution until, not long before he was murdered, Masᶜūd tackled the theme of the Iranian student returned from abroad, with a foreign wife or sweetheart incompatible with Iranian life, in which the foreign-trained student himself also found no place. He had something of social importance to say, and used the spoken language of Tehran in which to say it.

These novels of the thirties were received with an eagerness probably in part attributable to the newness of their treatment of sex. They also provided a relief from the voluminous historical romances, mostly based, however tenuously, upon Iran's pre-Islamic past, produced by authors whose leading exponents were Mūsā Naṣrī, Ḥasan Badīᶜ and Ṣanᶜatīzāda Kirmānī. The last outlived the other two and was not averse to glorifying Iran's ancient past in a manner consonant with Pahlavī policy. The other works alluded to above, devoted in their different ways to contemporary society, pushed these romances out of the forefront of attention. The importance of many of the works concerning contemporary social issues would in a final analysis lie more in their value as commentaries on a society in transitional turmoils than as literature. Jalāl Āl-i-Aḥmad was a better artist than some. His *Mudīr-i Madrasa*, "School Headmaster", and *Nafrīn-i Zamīn*, "Curse of the Soil", memorably depict the rural

scene;[91] but it was he who explicitly treated the problem of a region exploited, humiliated and misled by western hegemony, in his *Gharbzadagī*, "Being West-struck", published in 1962, seven years before his death.

Perhaps the episodic nature of the Iranian view of life, an incidental corruption measured against the light of Eternity, impaired the success of the novel. One of Balzacian proportions, and other qualities reminiscent of Balzac, was ʿAlī Muḥammad Afghānī's *Shauhar-i Āhū Khānum*, "Mrs Āhū's Husband", published in September 1961. It is a remarkable excursion into small-town life and the seduction, by a girl younger than his wife, of a middle-aged baker; but it has had no sequel of the same power. That it was by a man said to have been an army officer, but imprisoned in the post-1953 purge of young officers alleged to hold leftist views, gives this book another mark of uniqueness. The army nurtured by the two Pahlavī Shahs was seen as a means of spreading education, but it seems to have cradled few creative writers.

The eternal themes of Good and Evil were the chosen topic of a short but surprisingly precocious as well as beautiful book by a young writer named Taqī Mudarrisī, kinsman to men of former eminence both as leaders in the Constitutional Movement and for learning. The book, referring, somewhat enigmatically, to Jecholiah of the Old Testament, was called *Yakūlīya va Tanhāʾī-yi Ū*, "Jecholiah and Her Loneliness". Mudarissī's two later novels date from 1986 and 1989. Hidāyat and Chūbak both dealt with individuals outside themselves, with the notable exception of Hidāyat's *Būf-i Kūr*; individuals into whose feelings they had the knack of totally entering, and whom they made speak and respond to situations as such people would in life. Individuals whom they left as memorable characters and, with the assured touch of great artists, endowed with traits by which they could be universally recognized as revealing something that might be part of everyone. Chūbak's kingdom was not restricted to humans. He shows an empathy with animals reminiscent of that shown by D.H. Lawrence in certain of his poems.

Lack of space precludes further discussion of these and other prose-writers of modern Iran,[92] to include study both of foreign and inherited influences and to demonstrate how influences from abroad were frequently active more as catalysts than as sources of inspiration. Given an environment in which the Iranian artist could operate effectively, foreign examples would be needed only

[91] See Ehsan Yarshater for comments on the latter in Ricks (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 55.

[92] Ehsan Yarshater (ed.) *Persian Literature*, provides chapters on contemporary Persian Literature and a select bibliography of translations from modern Persia Literature into English.

to afford him the excitement of finding a commonwealth of craftsmen who strove for the effects he sought, and who were attempting to do justice to perceptions like his own. These remarks at least apply to those modern Iranian writers whose work will live, as will that of such poets as Lāhūtī, Shāmlū, Nādirpūr, Parvīn Iʿtiṣāmī, Farrukhzād, Nīmā; but reliable judges agree that it is probably too early to attempt any general assessment of the more recent poets' very idiosyncratic contribution to the Iranian Parnassus. Among the modern poets who merit notice are three women. Parvīn Iʿtiṣāmī, born in 1910, belongs to the earlier school which used traditional forms, and was a scholarly person. Zhāla Sulṭānī, who in 1986 was still publishing, in Moscow, is a poet of delicacy who, while using new forms, evinces the response to nature which, with a freshness and congenial descriptive power, was a feature of the Persian poets of the 10th to the 12th centuries. Finally, Furūgh Farrukhzād, who died in 1966, produced poems of a passionate sincerity which were the poignant expression of a deeply sensitive person's sense of alienation in the modern world, and modern Tehran in particular. These poems have placed her, after a mere fifteen years of literary activity, among poets of the first rank.

The poet's isolation, already alluded to in the context of the break with tradition, is significant for reasons a great deal more fundamental than the stylistic innovations which estranged him from the majority of his compatriots and made him an inhabitant of a "peninsula of intellectuals". For the poets of the most recent schools have all, either in politically motivated poems of bitter protest or those of searching introspection, made the burden of their utterance the intolerability of cultural betrayal, materialism, imposed ideology and the glorification of goals alien to the deepest instincts of their people. Their isolation in an Iran dragooned in directions distant from the cherished spiritual values of which Iranian poets for ages had been the exquisite exponents, has been inevitable. The historian and polemicist against religion and Sufism, Aḥmad Kasravī (1890–1946), has not been followed in his iconoclastic treatment of the great poets of the 13th to 15th centuries, although he remains respected as a fine historian. Instead, the poets of the sixties began once more to acknowledge a debt to an almost overwhelming tradition from which they had sufficiently freed themselves, thanks chiefly to Nīmā's example, for it to be no longer stifling. Since they were no longer baffled by forms and by stereotypes of imagery, for variations within and on which, even had they been in their power, they saw no further scope, the modern poets were free to discover consolation and kindred spirits in the poets of the past, especially Ḥāfiẓ. They had to develop techniques which would not inhibit poets in search of a kind of escape from a disillusioning

world different from that adopted by the ancient poets. The intricate patterns of the latter's poetry were part of their particular answer to the chaos of the wilderness, and their voices were not muffled by a sense of the individual's sole responsibility for personal failure, but clear in their questioning of Fate, and of a God in Whom they still believed. The moderns had to find themselves and then bear with lonely courage the self-knowledge they found. Furūgh Farrukhzād is remarkable for her expression of this resolution.[93]

[93] Selected poems of Furūgh Farrukhzād have been translated in Hasan Javadi and Susan Sallée, *Another Birth*.

CHAPTER 23

PERSIAN PAINTING UNDER THE ZAND AND QĀJĀR DYNASTIES

During the late 17th and early 18th centuries Persian painting was passing through a difficult stage. Just as in the Mongol period of the 14th century Persian artists were busy absorbing Chinese ideas and conventions, so in our period they were struggling to accommodate themselves to the artistic canons of Europe. We cannot blame them, however deplorable the tendency may seem; increasing contact with Europe made such a development inevitable. It was, indeed, going on simultaneously all over the East, and leaving its mark on various Asian schools of painting. In the hermit empire of Japan European scientific books and engravings of all kinds were eagerly sought and smuggled in through the Dutch traders in the face of official disapproval. By the end of the 18th century they were being regurgitated in Japanese popular form, and landscape prints attempting European perspective and atmospheric effects were designed by Toyoharu, Hokuju, and others. In China the same influences flowed into the open port of Canton, where many Chinese painters were busily producing pictures for the western market (a side-line to the tea trade) in which the native style is considerably modified by European ideas of perspective, modelling, and drapery. They vary enormously in quality, and were generally produced in series – court costumes, trades, boats on the Yang-tze, and even tortures – but no educated Chinaman of the time would have regarded them as true paintings. In India, too, the period 1750–1850 was the heyday of "Company Painting", usually practised under direct English patronage, and devoted to the illustration of local types, castes, religious festivals, fauna, flora, and topography, in a more or less westernized style.

But whilst in Japan, China, and India the traditional classical styles of painting continued in spite of the westernizing tendencies of a minority, in Persia European influences, once introduced, were all-pervading. The Persians, with their alert and sprightly genius, were always ready for something new. They paid lip-service to the past in their affection for the heroes of the national epic, but in practice the monuments of their former greatness were allowed to decay, or were even actively destroyed and plundered – as by Ẓill al-Sulṭān, the notorious governor of Iṣfahān at the end of the last century, in whose time many

fine palaces were thrown down and their contents sold piecemeal to the Armenian merchants, and the magnificent avenues of trees lining the Chahār Bāgh were chopped up for building-materials and firewood. The Chinese and Japanese, on the contrary, absorbed a practical reverence for the past with their mother's milk; heirlooms were handed down, collections of antiques were formed, scholarly treatises were written on antiquarian subjects, and ancient styles were copied and reproduced in every branch of art. In India the proliferation of independent princely courts that accompanied the break-up of the Mughul empire had a similar stabilizing effect on the styles of painting practised under their patronage, which remained unaffected by the westernizing styles prevalent in the East India Company's trading and administrative centres. But we shall see that even in Persia the imported European conventions were really no more than a veneer under which the paintings of the Zand and Qājār court artists remained obstinately Persian in spirit and essence.

Every new movement in Persian painting can be associated with or attributed to a particular master. Aḥmad Mūsā, who successfully absorbed new Chinese ideas into the old native tradition, and so "unveiled the face of painting" in the early 14th century; Bihzād, who infused new life, naturalism and individuality into the Timurid court style a hundred and fifty years later, thus laying the foundations of the sumptuous art of Tabrīz under Shāh Ṭahmāsp; and Riżā, to whom can be traced the masterly calligraphic style of wilting youths and languorous maidens that became universal under Shāh ʿAbbās I and II. So it is with the style under consideration. It seems to have been inaugurated by Muḥammad Zamān, son of Ḥājjī Yūsuf, whose work is founded on Flemish originals, which presumably reached Iran in the form of prints; and it was quickly taken up by Shaikh ʿAbbāsī, ʿAlī Qulī Jabbadār, ʿAlī Naqī, and others (pl. 4).[1] Meanwhile the native tradition of painting had degenerated considerably since the distinguished work of Riżā and his contemporaries, and though one or two good artists, such as Muḥammad Qāsim and Muʿīn, were still active in the years 1650–80, much of the work of this period consists of rather lifeless and mechanical imitations of the "Riżā style". In fact by the time Muḥammad Zamān appeared Persian painting was ready for an artist of genius to give it some new rejuvenating twist that might save it from stagnation for another century or two. Though Muḥammad Zamān was not an artist of the stature of Aḥmad Mūsā or Bihzād, the changes he introduced were far more sweeping and fundamental than any of his predecessors'; the modelling, perspective, and

[1] The most recent and authoritative treatment of the problems surrounding Muḥammad Zamān is by the Russian scholar A. Ivanov in *Album of Indian and Persian Miniatures of the XVI–XVIIIth Centuries.*

classical anatomy of the Flemish schools were entirely foreign to the Persian tradition. Nevertheless the new style "caught on" quickly by virtue of its novel and (to the Persians) exotic character, and before the end of the century it had become completely dominant in court painting, though the long-lived Muʿīn and one or two others continued to work in the style of his master Riżā.

However it was not only the style of Persian painting that was changing. In the classical period of the art the best work of the Persian painters was virtually confined to manuscript illustration; but in our period the student must take account of oil-paintings, flower-paintings, portraits from life, painted lacquer and enamel, *églomisé* (behind glass) painting, and, towards the middle of the 19th century, lithographed book-illustrations. No 18th-century manuscript exists, so far as we know at present, whose miniatures are better than a poor second class (excepting one or two at the very beginning of the Qājār period), and even in the more settled conditions of the 19th century really fine illustrated manuscripts are of the greatest rarity. The emphasis was on portraits, and for the first time since the Arab conquest, more than a thousand years earlier, court artists were required to represent their royal patrons life-size, and the monarch's portrait appeared on the coinage. The earliest examples of this new trend, in direct imitation of the normal European practice of life-size portraits, are probably the pictures of Shāh ʿAbbās II and his chief wife which were shown at Burlington House in 1931 (*Catalogue* Nos. 761, 768); they may even have been the work of Muḥammad Zamān himself. In the 18th century the favourite subjects were, naturally enough, Nādir Shāh and Karīm Khān Zand. At least two good life-size oil portraits of Nādir Shāh may be accepted as contemporary: (i) Victoria and Albert Museum No. I.M.20-1919, seated. This painting is especially noteworthy for the very fine rendering of the gold enamelled sword-mounts and other accessories. (ii) India Office collection, *Foster* (1924), No. 44. Three-quarter length, standing (pl. 5). Foster considered this to be by the same hand as the Victoria and Albert portrait, but this is not necessarily so. (The portrait reproduced in *Martin*, II.168, signed by Muḥammad Panāh with the cryptic date "24", is almost certainly Indian work.) The Europeanizing style of these two portraits is of a different type from that found in the work of Muḥammad Zamān, suggesting that the artist(s) had studied contemporary European portraits, possibly in India. It is a straightforward portrait style, retaining nothing of the meticulous western landscape background and details beloved of Muḥammad Zamān.

The only oasis of peace and prosperity in Persia during the 18th century was at Shīrāz under the strong but benevolent rule of Karīm Khān Zand (1750–79). This was the time and place of the formation of the style that came to its full

blossoming under Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh fifty years later, and the best examples of it at this early stage are probably those (at least until recently) to be seen in that city, in the Pārs Museum and the Haft Tan pavilion. Karīm Khān was a great builder, and many of his buildings were adorned with paintings.[2] The Pārs Museum itself was housed in a pavilion built for his own use, and contains a magnificent oil-painting of his court signed by Jaʿfar, of whom, alas, nothing else is known. The characterization of Karīm Khān himself is superb, as he sits at ease, smoking his *qalyān* and looking knowingly out of the picture towards the spectator, who has the impression that the great man is almost winking at him in contempt of the stiffly formal courtiers by whom he is surrounded (pl. 2*c*).

But the foremost exponent of the style at this time seems to have been Muḥammad Ṣādiq who, like most of his successors, worked in various media – oils, miniature painting, and lacquer. His large-scale works survive in the Pārs Museum and in the Amery Collection;[3] and a number of pieces of painted lacquer bear his signature (pl. 8), but some of these are obviously unacceptable as authentic. Fine miniatures by Ṣādiq are also sometimes encountered. His usual signature takes the form of an invocation, *Yā Ṣādiq al-waʿda*, "O he who speaks truly in his promise", one among many commonly on the lips of devout Muslims. This form of punning invocation-signature seems to have become popular from the late 17th century onwards; it may have originated towards the end of the Safavid period with Muḥammad Zamān, whose *Yā Ṣāḥib al-Zamān*, "O Lord of Time" (normally addressed to ʿAlī) is found on some of his works, and was imitated by an early 19th-century painter of the same name. Ṣādiq's work is meticulous in execution, and his faces have a markedly European cast, founded, we may suppose, on European originals of his own period, and thus differing considerably from those of the late Safavid Europeanizers, whose models were 17th-century Flemish. His dates are uncertain, but he seems to have had a long working life spanning the second half of the 18th century. On the one hand Texier reports a current tradition that in 1738 he executed the large mural in the Chihil Sutūn at Iṣfahān depicting the victory of Nādir Shāh at Karnal over the Mughul Emperor Muḥammad Shāh;[4] and on the other, we have lacquer pieces bearing his signature coupled with dates in the last decade of the century.[5]

Ashraf was another notable artist working in the middle years of the 18th

[2] Edward Scott Waring, p. 38 gives an account of the paintings in the Haft Tan pavilion. Fuller accounts of paintings still to be seen at Shiraz will be found in ʿAlī Sāmī, pp. 37, 41, 44, 66.

[3] Falk, *Qajar Paintings*, nos. 4–8. This most useful book reproduces all 63 paintings of the Amery Collection in colour. It may be supplemented by Robinson, "The Amery Collection of Persian Oil-paintings".

[4] Charles Texier, *Description de l'Arménie*, p. 129.

[5] For example two mirror-cases in the Bern Historical Museum, dated 1210/1795 and 1211/1796 respectively. See Robinson, "Persian Lacquer in the Bern Historical Museum", p. 48.

century. His surviving work, all in painted lacquer, is of very high quality but somewhat limited in scope, consisting almost invariably of close-set flower-designs on a black ground among which are set medallions exquisitely painted with birds. Only one human representation, a lovely girl's head, has so far been noted from his brush; the face is closer to Muḥammad Zamān than to Ṣādiq, although the date is 1169/1756 (pls. 10, 11). He signed with a punning formula, *ẓi baʿd-i Muḥammad ʿAlī Ashraf ast*, "After Muḥammad, ʿAli is the noblest", and his dated work spans the period 1740–56.

The political situation between the death of Karīm Khān in 1779 and the accession of the first Qājār monarch, Āghā Muḥammad Shāh, in 1795 was extremely confused, and there was no opportunity for schools of painting to flourish and develop under settled patronage. But even before their rise to supreme power the Qājārs were to a limited extent patrons of the arts, and had captured the services of at least one painter who set a high standard for the first generation of their rule. Mīrzā Bābā has signed a very fine small drawing of a dragon and phoenix, formerly in the Pozzi collection, and has dated it "at Astarābād" 1203/1789. Astarābād was the seat of the Qājār family during their struggle for the throne. Once the dynasty was established he was able to undertake works of greater importance and on a larger scale. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh made him *naqqāsh-bāshī*, or Painter Laureate, at the beginning of his reign, and he was accordingly entrusted with important commissions intended to diffuse a sense of the majesty of the King of Kings among the distant nations of Europe. These included the magnificent manuscript of the King's own *Dīvān*, which was taken to England by his ambassador Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān (the original of Morier's "Hajji Baba of Ispahan") as a present to his "brother" George III, and is now in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle.[6] The beautifully painted lacquer covers, the lavish illuminations and marginal decorations, and two fine miniature portraits of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh himself (pl. 9) and of his uncle and predecessor, Āghā Muḥammad Shāh, are all the work of Mīrzā Bābā; the only part of the manuscript for which he was not responsible is the text, which is in the elegant calligraphy of Muḥammad Mahdī, the Royal Scribe. Mīrzā Bābā also painted the superb life-size portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, dated 1213/1799, which was presented to the East India Company in 1806 and now hangs in the Commonwealth Relations Office (pl. 12).[7] Like most of the best artists of his time, Mīrzā Bābā showed his versatility in the various available media. Some of his achievements

[6] See Robinson, *Persian Miniature Painting from Collections in the British Isles*, no. 95.

[7] William Foster, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Paintings &c., in the India Office*, no. 116; reproduced in Sir Percy Sykes, *A History of Persia* II, opp. p. 300.

in oils, miniature (pl. 13*a*), illumination, and painted lacquer (pl. 13*b*) have already been noted, but he also worked in painted enamel and *églomisé*. Virtually nothing is known of him beyond his actual works. Sir William Ouseley notes that he and other members of the Embassy staff were assigned quarters in the house formerly belonging to a certain Mīrzā Bābā, who had recently paid the supreme penalty for the crime of embezzlement, but gives no indication of whether or not this was the painter of that name.[8] The latter's latest work so far noted bears the date 1225/1810, which may perhaps be advanced in support of the identification; the Embassy arrived in Tehran in 1811.

Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's inordinate vanity and, it must be admitted, strikingly handsome appearance ensured full employment for any painter who could convey an adequately resplendent impression of the royal person. "I never before had beheld anything like such perfect majesty . . . His face seemed exceedingly pale, of a polished marble hue; with the finest contour of features; and eyes dark, brilliant, and piercing" wrote Sir Robert Ker Porter.[9] Mīrzā Bābā's chief rivals in this field of royal portraiture were Mihr ʿAlī, ʿAbd-Allāh Khān, and Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān. The first of these seems to have made his début with a life-size seated portrait of the King sent as a present to the Amirs of Sind in 1800. That, at least, is a possible inference from (i) Sir John Malcolm's story of the local governor and villagers prostrating themselves before the securely packed and boxed-up portrait when it was being embarked for Sind at Bushire,[10] and (ii) a large portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, signed by Mihr ʿAlī and dated 1212/1798, in the Victoria Hall, Calcutta (pl. 14*a*). The most probable explanation of its presence there seems to be that it was brought back among the spoils of the Sind War of 1843. Mihr ʿAlī followed this with two fine portraits for the Hall of the Marble Throne in the Gulistān Palace, dated 1218/1803 and 1219/1804 respectively, and another entrusted to Napoleon's envoy, M. Jaubert, as a present for the Emperor. This is now in the Museum of the Palace of Versailles (pl. 14*b*).[11] Altogether nine of these life-size portraits of the King by Mihr ʿAlī have been noted, the latest being dated 1230/1815. By far the finest shows Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh full-length, standing, wearing his huge crown (compared by Texier[12] to the crowns of the Achaemenids), clad in a gorgeous robe of flowered gold brocade, and holding a jewelled staff of majesty surmounted by Solomon's

[8] Sir William Ouseley, *Travels* III, p. 138. See also Falk, *op. cit.*, pls. 2, 3.

[9] Sir Robert Ker Porter, *Travels* I, p. 325. [10] Sir John Malcolm, *Sketches*, p. 44.

[11] The rediscovery of this fine portrait is due to the efforts of the eminent Persian scholar Dr Firuz Bagherzadeh. I made a fruitless attempt to trace it through the French Embassy in London some years ago. A fine and accurate engraving was made of it in Paris (Grégorius *del.*, L.C. Ruotte *sculp.*, published by Potrelle, rue St. Honoré no. 142). [12] Texier, p. 128.

hoopoe.[13] It is dated 1225/1810, and has often been reproduced. This magnificent painting was formerly the showpiece of the Amery Collection, and may possibly be the one sent as a present to the Prince Regent in 1812; the reception of three pictures "including a portrait of the Emperor [sc. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh] himself" is recorded in the Carlton House day-book, but they are no longer to be found in the royal collection.[14] Between 1798 and 1805 Mihr ʿAlī's style and drawing improved enormously; his early portraits give Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh a squat neck and round face, but in the later ones the proportions are much more pleasing and, incidentally, flattering (pl. 65).

Like many of his colleagues, Mihr ʿAlī was also employed on paintings to cover the interior walls of palaces. Sir William Ouseley saw a series of "portraits" of early Persian kings recently painted by him in a palace at Iṣfahān: "The portraits of many ancient kings, represented of the natural size, contribute to embellish this palace. They have been painted within ten or twelve years by a celebrated artist, Mihr ʿAlī of Tehran; who has not only marked each picture with his own name, but considerately added the title of each illustrious personage whom he intended to delineate. This alone enables the spectator to distinguish Feridún, Núshíraván and others from Iscander or Alexander the Great, whose face, dress, and arms are, most probably, the same that Mihr ʿAlī's imagination would have assigned to any Persian prince of the last fifty or hundred years."[15]

Mihr ʿAlī may also have been responsible for an enormous canvas depicting Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, crowned and bejewelled, hunting in the company of a number of his sons. This painting was formerly in the India Office collection, but was handed over to the Government of India in 1929, and now hangs in Rashtrapati Bhavan, the former Viceroy's residence in New Delhi.[16] It is by all accounts an impressive piece of work, and a passage in Morier's "Hajji Baba in England" may perhaps indicate that it was one of the pictures sent to the Prince Regent in 1812. Morier is describing how the gifts intended for the King of England were paraded for inspection by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh before the departure of his ambassador from Tehran: "The painter-in-chief was then ordered to exhibit the portrait, which was indeed a great and immortal effort of art. It represented the shah in the chase, in the very act of piercing an antelope with a spear on the fullest speed of his horse, with the crown on his head, his magnificent armlets buckled to his

[13] Falk, no. 15, where the date is read as 1228/1813.

[14] I am grateful to Sir Oliver Millar, formerly Surveyor of the Queen's pictures, for the communication of this information. [15] Ouseley, III, p. 26.

[16] Foster, no. 50. I have only a small and not very good snapshot of this picture to go on.

arm and dressed in all the state jewels. The painter, with inimitable ingenuity, had contrived to introduce forty of his sons, like so many stars in the firmament blazing in different constellated groups; but for want of room he could not introduce the rest."[17] One last glimpse of the great Mihr ʿAlī is provided by a small water-colour study of a man's head, inscribed as having been executed by him in 1829 as a model for his pupil Abuʾl-Ḥasan Khān Ghaffārī who, better known by his proud title of *Ṣanīʿ al-Mulk* ("Painter of the Kingdom"), became the foremost Persian painter in the middle years of the 19th century.[18] He was a worthy pupil of such a master.

ʿAbd-Allāh Khān grew old in the service of the Qājār dynasty. Murdoch Smith says that he died at a great age at the beginning of the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, that is, about 1848.[19] His greatest achievement was the celebrated mural covering three sides of the Nigāristān Palace interior (pls. 16, 17). On the shorter wall at the end was depicted Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh enthroned in state, surrounded by a group of his sons; below him were six *ghulām*s carrying the royal shield, sword, and other appurtenances. Down each of the side-walls was a double row of courtiers (above) and foreign ambassadors (below), the latter including, on one side, Sir Gore Ouseley, Sir Harford Jones, and Sir John Malcolm, and, on the other, Napoleon's envoys General Gardane and MM. Jaubert and Jouannin. The whole composition comprised no less than 118 full-length life-size figures. It is described by most of the 19th-century European travellers, by some of whom it was attributed to Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān; but E.G. Browne, who saw it during his "Year amongst the Persians", quotes the inscription below the picture stating that it was executed by ʿAbd-Allāh Khān in 1812–13, and his circumstantial statement may be unreservedly accepted.[20] The original painting has long since disappeared, but a facsimile, made in 1904, is said to be in the Foreign Ministry at Tehran. Smaller copies were sometimes made for interested visitors, one of which was engraved in London in 1834.[21] Among a number of royal and princely portraits ascribed to ʿAbd-Allāh Khān the best is a portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh standing , in a red robe and bejewelled astrakhan cap, in the Victoria and Albert Museum (No. 707–1876). He also executed frescoes of the

[17] James Morier, *The Adventures of Hajji Baba in England* (World's Classics edition, 1925, p. 28).

[18] He is the subject of an excellent pair of articles (in Persian) by Dr Yahya Zoka in *Hunar va Mardum*, nos. 10, 11, where this sketch is reproduced. I here express my gratitude and indebtedness to Dr Zoka for much of the information here given.

[19] Sir Robert Murdoch Smith, *Persian Art*, p. 78.

[20] E.G. Browne, *A year amongst the Persians*, p. 105.

[21] A good copy is in the India Office Library, Add. Or. 1239–1242 (pls. 16, 17). The engraving was published in London by Robert Havell of 77 Oxford Street; a copy hangs in the Royal Asiatic Society, to which the engraving was dedicated.

courts of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh and his predecessor Āqā Muḥammad Shāh on the walls of the palace of Karaj. These were seen by Lady Sheil in the 1850s, and she comments, "The likenesses of the chiefs are said to be excellent, and that of Agha Mahommed Khan inimitable. The former are fine, sturdy, determined-looking warriors. Agha Mahommed looks like a fiend. The atrocious, cold, calculating ferocity which marked the man is stamped on his countenance."[22] ʿAbd-Allāh Khān himself appears, very briefly, in one traveller's narrative, that of William Price, who merely notes that on 12 May 1812 he "called upon Akabdool [sc. *Āqā* ʿAbd-Allāh (Khān)] Nakosh-bashee, head painter to the Shah; he shewed several portraits of the royal family, khans, &c."[23]

Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān was of a slightly lesser stature than the three court painters so far discussed (pl. 15). But his work is competent and conscientious, and in a set of three portraits of princes, one with a child, in the Amery collection, he reaches a high level.[24] The same collection includes a painting of Shaikh Ṣanʿān and the Christian maiden,[25] bearing his signature; this was a favourite subject for illustration in Zand and Qājār times, partly, one suspects, because it afforded an opportunity of portraying Europeans (the Christian maiden and her entourage) in which the artists of the period obviously took great delight. There are also several pictures of girls in which his hand may be detected from his soft method of rendering the features, a fondness for a sort of foxy red, and a vase of flowers which is almost a trademark.[26] Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān has also left some excellent miniature paintings, usually in the form of monochrome portraits; good examples of these are in the Museum of Decorative Arts, Tehran (pl. 19), and the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva (Pozzi Collection, Cat. No. 213).

One other artist of the early part of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's reign deserves notice, though nothing whatever is known of him personally, and only one composition by him, and that in a fragmentary state, is known to have survived – Abuʾl-Qāsim. He painted three of the most outstanding pictures of girls in the Amery Collection (pl. 18) and a portrait of the King seated, in another private collection.[27] One of the former bears his signature and the date 1231/1816. The fact that all these have the same continuous architectural background and are on the same scale – a little less than life-size – makes it almost certain that they all originally formed a single long composition, of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh entertained with

[22] Lady Sheil, *Glimpses of Life and Manners in Persia*, p. 115.

[23] William Price, *Journal of the British Embassy to Persia*, p. 36.

[24] Falk, nos. 26–8.

[25] *Ibid.*, no. 30.

[26] *Ibid.*, nos. 26, 31, 33.

[27] *Ibid.*, nos. 19–21. See also Robinson, "The Court Painters of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh", p. 103 and pl. XXXV.

music and dancing by a group of his ladies. Indeed, this may well have been the painting described by Binning as adorning the house he occupied at Shīrāz: "The upper part of the wall is occupied by a representation of his late majesty Fat'h Alee Shah sitting in state, and attended by ten ladies. The figures, which extend round three sides of the room, are nearly as large as life, and gaudily coloured. Whether they are good likenesses or not, I cannot pretend to say."[28] This portrait of the King, though certainly well painted, does not stand up to those by Mīrzā Bābā or Mihr ʿAlī, but the girls are remarkable, carrying the Persian ideal of feminine beauty to its utmost extreme. Their coiffures are elaborate, they are covered with jewels, and their faces have an insinuating and languorous beauty that sets them in a class by themselves. It is indeed strange that no other works of this talented and original artist appear to have survived.

Among the second generation of court painters, active towards the end of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's reign and during that of his grandson and successor Muḥammad Shāh, the best was probably Aḥmad who, to judge from his early style, may well have been a pupil of Mihr ʿAlī. Two fine portraits of the King carry his signature. One, which hung in the British Embassy at Tehran for well over a century, is dated 1238/1823 (pl. 20);[29] the King sits on a jewelled carpet with an elaborate *qalyān* beside him. The other shows him in armour seated on the *Takht-i Nādirī*, a splendid throne of chair-form (not the usual platform-like Persian *takht*) which is still to be seen, together with the jewelled shield he is represented carrying, in the Crown Jewels collection; unfortunately the face has been completely repainted. This portrait, which is dated 1234/1819, was lent by the late Sir Charles Marling to the International Exhibition of Persian Art at Burlington House in 1931, when it was reproduced in the *Souvenir* and the signature was wrongly read as "Asad" in the Catalogue.[30] These are both early works; his later style became much more European, as witness a large painting dated 1260/1844 of Muḥammad Shāh reviewing his troops, in the Hall of the Marble Throne (Gulistān Palace), and a fine bust-portrait of the same monarch, dated two years later, in the Firuz collection, Tehran.

Another artist of this time who stands out as an individual may have been named Muḥammad. A painting of a girl by him in the Foroughi collection, Tehran, bears the inscription *Yā Muḥammad*, presumably one of the punning invocation-signatures already noticed, accompanied by the date 1258/1842 (pl.

[28] Robert B.M. Binning, *A Journal of Two Years' Travel in Persia* I, p. 211.

[29] Edward B. Eastwick, *Three Years' Residence in Persia* I, p. 225.

[30] *Catalogue* of the International Exhibition of Persian Art, Burlington House (London, 1931), no. 867; *Souvenir* of the above, p. 49.

21*a*).[31] His style is perhaps the easiest to pick out amongst all the Qājār painters, and the plump moon-faced girls in which he delighted are reminiscent of Renoir; his male figures are less successful.[32]

Sayyid Mīrzā makes a third in this second generation group. His most impressive work, now in the Firuz collection, Tehran, is a very large group of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh enthroned and attended by his sons and courtiers; it was formerly in the Hasht Bihisht palace at Iṣfahān, and can be clearly seen in Coste's engraving (pl. 21*b*).[33] Two rather stiff portraits of princes by him are reproduced by Schulz,[34] but all his charm and skill come out in the Amery collection picture of Yūsuf, the biblical Joseph, represented as a handsome young Qājār nobleman against a delightful landscape background.[35] Sayyid Mīrzā was also an outstanding painter in lacquer, and executed the front cover of the new binding commissioned by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh for the Niẓāmī manuscript of Shāh Ṭahmāsp; the subject is the favourite one of the King hunting with his sons, and the quality of the work is superb (pl. 22).[36]

The back cover of the same binding, also portraying the King on a hunting expedition, is signed by Muḥammad Bāqir (pl. 23). Unfortunately this seems to have been a remarkably popular name amongst artists of the Zand and Qājār periods, and paintings of various kinds so signed are found from the early 18th century onwards.[37] In this case, however, we know that the artist in question worked under the patronage of the King himself. Beside this book-cover may be placed a fine group of royal enamels signed Bāqir (in such names as Muḥammad Bāqir the first element was frequently omitted); making allowance for the difference of medium, the styles are very similar, and as the best artists often turned their hands to any kind of painting that might be required it may be permissible, failing evidence to the contrary, to attribute both lacquer and enamels to the same hand. Examples of Bāqir's painted enamels are in the Crown Jewels collection,[38] and an extremely fine gold bowl, cover, saucer, and spoon, enamelled with the Signs of the Zodiac, the Planets, and other astronomical/

[31] This painting was reproduced on the cover of *l'Oeil*, Paris, November 1961. Other paintings of girls by him are in the Victoria and Albert Museum (nos. 708, 709, 716–1876), and others are reproduced in Falk, nos. 43–5, 47, and one in the Tiflis Museum in Sh.Y. Amiranashvili, *Iranskaya stankovaya zhivopis'* (Tiflis, 1940), pl. IX.

[32] E.g. Falk, nos. 46, 48.

[33] Pascal Coste, *Monuments Modernes de la Perse*, pl. XXXVI–XXXVIII.

[34] W.P. Schulz, *Die persisch-islamische Miniaturmalerei* II, pl. 185.

[35] Falk, no. 37.

[36] British Museum Or. 2265. See B.W. Robinson, "A Pair of Royal Book-covers".

[37] E.g. Robinson, *Persian miniature painting*, no. 91, pl. 35, where references to other examples are given.

[38] V.B. Meen and A.D. Tushingham, *Crown Jewels of Iran*, p. 86; Robinson, "Qajar Painted Enamels", p. 195 and fig. 122.

astrological figures, and inscribed with a dedicatory poem to Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, is in a private collection (pl. 66).[39] On this latter piece Bāqir uses the almost unprecedented title of *ghulām-khānazād* which means, literally, "slave born in the household", but should be understood in the context to convey some such meaning as "craftsman in the royal workshops". The only other occurrence of this expression with an artist's signature so far noted is on the work of ʿAlī, another enamel-painter, very close to Bāqir in both style and date. He has, in fact, signed the finest of all the painted enamels in the Persian Crown Jewels collection, a magnificent oval hand-mirror with handle of carved jade, and the back enamelled with a fine portrait of the King seated within a rich floral frame (pl. 67).[40] He was also responsible for a standing portrait of the King, dated 1233/1818, enamelled on the gold centre of a nephrite dish presented to the Emperor Franz I in 1819 and now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. The only other artist in painted enamel at this period who calls for special mention is Muḥammad Jaʿfar, who seems to have been much employed on objects intended for official presentation. Thus his signature is to be found on the two massive gold enamel dishes presented by his royal master to Sir Gore Ouseley (dated 1228/1813) and to the East India Company (dated 1233/1818), the latter now in the Victoria and Albert Museum (pl. 6).[41] He also executed insignia of the Order of the Lion and Sun, instituted in honour of Sir John Malcolm. However a number of other pieces – *qalyān*-bowls, snuff-boxes, etc. – bear his signature. His work is as fine as that of ʿAlī and Bāqir, but the drawing of his faces tends to be a little hard and formal. In general, Persian painted enamels of the Qājār period are often the most attractive manifestations of the painter's skill. Even so severe a critic as the Comte de Rochechouart ("quant aux peintures que les Persans produisent eux-mêmes, c'est à faire grincer les dents") was enchanted by them, and compared them favourably with imported Swiss enamels that he saw at the same time.[42]

Painted lacquer by Ṣādiq, Mīrzā Bābā, Mihr ʿAlī, Bāqir, and Sayyid Mīrzā has already been mentioned; this art had reached a very high standard and achieved enormous popularity during the reign of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, and fine pieces – mirror-cases, pen-boxes (*qalamdān*), caskets, spectacles-cases, and playing cards – are encountered with increasing frequency as the 19th century proceeds. Sir

[39] See Robinson, "A Royal Qajar Enamel". [40] Meen and Tushingham, pp. 70, 71.

[41] No.I.S.09406. See B.W. Robinson, "The Royal Gifts of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh"; also Robinson, "Qajar Painted Enamels", p. 202, and fig. 130.

[42] M. le Comte Julien de Rochechouart, *Souvenirs*, pp. 252 ff. A remarkable collection of Persian painted enamels, formed by the late M. Jambon, was auctioned in Paris, Hôtel Drouot, 25–6 May 1964, a number of which are illustrated in the catalogue, including one in colour on the cover.

William Ousely has described the enormous choice available, and the Comte de Rochechouart, a very acute observer, has left a detailed account of the whole process.[43] Reduced to its essentials, this consisted in coating papier-mâché (or, less frequently, wood) with a fine gesso or plaster, upon whose surface the design was painted in water-colours, the whole being finally covered with a transparent lacquer or varnish, usually of a pale golden hue, which warmed and enriched the whole effect. It is hardly necessary to point out that the process is thus totally different from the art of lacquer as practised in China and Japan. One family may be regarded as the foremost specialists in painted lacquer during the early Qājār period. The head of it was Najaf ʿAlī, son of a painter of Iṣfahān named Āqā Bābā; his dated work spans the period 1815–56, and he always signed with the punning invocation *Yā Shāh-i Najaf*. He was followed by his three sons and younger brother, and between them they were responsible for much of the finest lacquer produced in Iran down to about 1890.[44]

In painted lacquer as in other branches of painting the taste for European mannerisms and subjects continued unabated, but unfortunately the only models normally available to the Persian painters at this time seem to have been French and other prints of poor quality and often execrable taste, from which are derived the dissipated young men in smoking-caps and dressing-gowns and the young ladies simpering coquettishly under their poke-bonnets who form such a considerable proportion of the mid 19th-century Persian lacquer painter's repertoire. Sometimes religious (Christian) subjects were incongruously attempted; the Holy Family in various garbled forms had been a popular theme for mirror-cases since the 18th century, and Najaf himself produced a dignified St Jerome (pl. 8), of which a number of inferior versions issued later from his studio. One of the most remarkable pieces of mid-19th century lacquer must have been the qalamdān shown to the traveller Hommaire de Hell by the artist himself, whose name, alas, is not mentioned.[45] It was unfinished at the time, but was already adorned with lively miniature representations of heaven and hell, and awaited the addition of scenes from the life of Napoleon, "d'après un tableau français", which were to cover its sides. But the most frequently encountered designs on lacquer-work of all periods are variations on the rose and nightingale (*gul-bulbul*) theme.

Najaf's younger brother Muḥammad Ismaʿīl (pls. 8, 24–26) and his three sons

[43] Ouseley, vol. III, p. 62; Rochechouart, chap. XXII, "Du cartonnage et de la peinture".

[44] See Amīr Mas ūd Sipahram, "Āqā Najaf Iṣfahānī qalamdān-sāz", p. 25 (in Persian).

[45] Xavier Hommaire de Hell, *Voyage en Turquie et en Perse* III, p. 18. This may be the same piece as G. Wiet, *Exposition d'Art Persan*, no. P.87, which was sold at Sotheby's on 9 October 1978, lot 87.

Muḥammad Kāẓim (pls. 27, 28*a*, *b*), Jaᶜfar, and Aḥmad (pls. 28*c*, *d*), all excelled in lacquer-painting, Ismaᶜīl indeed attaining the title of naqqāsh-bāshī. His masterpiece is a box or casket in the Bern Historical Museum, covered with scenes of Muḥammad Shāh's siege of Herat, which contain literally hundreds of tiny figures; it is dated 1282/1865 (pl. 24).[46] Kaẓim's painted enamels (pl. 28) are almost finer than his lacquer (pl. 27), and examples may be seen in the Crown Jewels collection;[47] Jaᶜfar also worked in both enamel and lacquer. It is, in fact, largely owing to the work of this talented family that the third quarter of the 19th century is the most brilliant period in the history of Persian enamel and lacquer painting. A number of their contemporaries were turning out lacquer of almost equal quality, and one of them, Āqā Buzurg of Shīrāz, deserves special notice. He was an excellent portraitist and miniaturist in the style of the time, and his finest piece is perhaps a qalamdān now in the Museum of Decorative Arts, Tehran, dated 1269/1853 (pl. 29). Not only is it painted with penetrating portraits of all the ministers of Prince Farhād Mīrzā the Governor, but also – an almost unique feature – with a self-portrait of the artist, modestly relegated to the butt-end, showing him in the act of painting a qalamdān.[48]

Églomisé, or under-glass painting, is a difficult technique. The paint being applied behind the glass, the process has to be executed in reverse, so to speak, beginning with the highlights and other surface details, and finishing with the background colour. The idea probably reached Persia in the form of imported examples from Germany, where the art was extensively practised. The Persian painters attained great proficiency at it, and fine large portraits of Fatḥ ᶜAlī Shāh and his sons, painted in *églomisé* by Mihr ᶜAlī and others, can still be seen in the Museum of Decorative Arts, Tehran, and elsewhere (pl. 30*b*). One or two more modest examples, representing girls, were exhibited on loan at the Victoria and Albert Museum. But as they are painted on thin sheets of glass these paintings are particularly vulnerable, and not very many have survived. A number of them were seen mounted in niches in the audience-chamber of the palace by Lieut.-Col. John Johnson in 1817, and they reminded him strongly of Chinese works of the same kind which were imported into Europe in considerable numbers during the eighteenth century.

[46] See B.W. Robinson, "Persian Lacquer in the Bern Historical Museum", pp. 47–50, especially pls. I–IV. For other works of Muḥammad Ismaᶜīl, and his career, see Robinson, "A Lacquer Mirror-case of 1854".

[47] Meen and Tushingham, p. 102 (where his name is wrongly spelt as "Qazim"); Robinson, "Qajar Painted Enamels", pp. 197–99 and figs. 123, 124.

[48] For two other self-portraits see Meen and Tushingham, p. 61 (the enamel-painter ᶜAbdallāh), and Messrs Sotheby, *Catalogue*, II.xii (1973), Lot 497 (self-portrait of Muḥammad Ismaᶜīl).

In the field of painting proper, and more particularly of portrait-painting, Abu'l-Ḥasan Khān Ghaffārī of Kāshān is by far the most important figure during the reign of Muḥammad Shāh and the early years of Nāṣir al-Dīn,[49] though some fine work was produced by his contemporaries, especially Muḥammad Ḥasan Afshār (pl. 30*a*).[50] As has been already noted, Abu'l-Ḥasan had been a pupil of Mihr ʿAlī, and his early works show a remarkable gift for merciless portraiture (pl. 31). He studied in Italy for two or three years, returning in 1850, when he was appointed naqqāsh-bāshī. He spent the year 1853 designing and supervising the illustration of an enormous six-volume manuscript, now in the Gulistān Imperial Library, containing a Persian translation of the "Arabian Nights". Throughout this manuscript pages of text alternate with pages of miniature painting, the latter numbering no less than 1134, and each page carrying at least three miniatures (pl. 32).[51] For this monumental task Abu'l-Ḥasan organized a team of thirty-four painters, supplying the designs and executing some of the best miniatures himself; some of his preliminary sketches for them are in the British Library (Or.4938). Many of these miniatures are of extremely high quality with vivid colouring and imaginative treatment; the costumes and details are all, of course, those of mid-19th-century Iran. Four years later he led his team in another major project: a set of seven large wall-panels for the Niẓāmiyya Palace, modelled on the Nigāristān frescoes of ʿAbd-Allāh Khān. These are now in the Archaelogical Museum, Tehran, and depict Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, enthroned in state, surrounded by sons and courtiers and attended by foreign ambassadors; each figure is a life-size and lively portrait, and preliminary sketches for a number of them are preserved in the same museum. The ambassadors include the Comte de Gobineau, whose classic *Trois Années en Asie* gives a penetrating picture of Iran at this time, but Mr Murray the English envoy is excluded owing to the strained relations between Great Britain and Iran following the brief Anglo-Persian war of January–March 1857. *Pace* the Comte de Rochechouart, who saw these paintings shortly after their installation ("rien du monde de plus buffon que ces portraits"), the effect is impressive, more

[49] See note 18 above, p. 877.

[50] Dated work between 1839 and 1863, of which the most notable are perhaps a miniature portrait of Muḥammad Shāh in the British Library (Or. 4938, no. 2) dated 1263/1847, and three large oil-portraits of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, one in the Chihil Sutūn, Iṣfahān, signed Muḥammad Ḥasan Afshār *naqqāsh-bāshī* and dated 1276/1860, and the other two, both unsigned but clearly attributable stylistically, in Tehran (Gulistān Palace and Moghadam Collection, pl. 30*a*). For this last see Sacheverell Sitwell, *Arabesque and Honeycomb*, p. 35, where it is illustrated and attributed to Ṣanīʿ al-Mulk.

[51] One page of miniatures is reproduced in colour in R. Sanghvi, *Persia the Immortal Kingdom*, p. 111, and others in *Sarv e Naz* (see note 56), pp. 151, 153, 154, 157, 159.

especially of the central group with the dignified figure of the Shah himself, and the execution is brilliant. In 1861 Abu'l-Ḥasan was given the title of Ṣanī' al-Mulk ("Painter of the Kingdom") and appointed Director of Printing with the special task of editing the Government weekly *Rūznāma-yi Daulat-i 'Alīya-yi Īrān*, printed by lithography and illustrated with portraits of princes, statesmen, soldiers, and with representations of remarkable events (pl. 33*b*). These are among the finest products of the lithographic process to be found in any Persian publication. The journal continued to appear after Abu'l-Ḥasan's death in 1866, but with a sad falling-off in standards of production and draughtsmanship.

Lithographed books with illustrations had begun to appear in Persia in the 1840s. Many of them were little popular story-books whose illustrations, though not without a disarming naïveté and charm, are often crude and incompetent. Better, though sometimes duller, work is to be found in illustrated editions of the classics. 'Alī Qulī of Khūy was prominent in this field; his Niẓāmī (Tehran, 1264/1848) and *Shāhnāma* (Tehran, 1265–7/1849–50) are noteworthy, the former containing a full-page illustration of various stages in the lithographic process (pl. 33*a*). A later Tehran *Shāhnāma* (1308/1891) was illustrated by the well-known lacquer-painter Muṣṭafā (cf. pl. 8). But in this field, as in every other which he touched, Abu'l-Ḥasan has no serious rivals.[52]

It may well be asked what was happening in the realm of manuscript-illustration and miniature painting in general during this period. As has already been indicated, Qājār miniature painting is usually seen at its best in painted lacquer and enamels, but fine illustrated manuscripts are occasionally encountered. Mīrzā Bābā's superb copy of the *Dīvān* of Fatḥ 'Alī Shāh and Abu'l-Ḥasan's monumental "Arabian Nights" have already been mentioned, but apart from them it must be admitted that there is little of really outstanding merit. The Mahboubian Collection contains a fine *Anvār-i Suhailī* dated 1203/1789 (produced under Qājār patronage, but before their accession to the throne) whose exquisitely painted miniatures may be credibly attributed to Mīrzā Bābā, though they are not signed. The glories of Fatḥ 'Alī Shāh's reign and the exploits of his forebears in their struggle for power against the Zands and others were fulsomely celebrated in a voluminous epic, the *Shāhanshāh-Nāma*, or "Book of the King of Kings", by his poet laureate, Ṣabā (Fatḥ 'Alī Khān). Four splendid copies of this work are known, each containing fifty-odd miniatures of reasonably good quality though of a rather routine character – mostly battle-scenes and representations of the King enthroned – in the Majlis Library, Tehran (No.

[52] For Persian lithographed book-illustrations in general see H. Massé, "L'imagerie populaire de l'Iran", pp. 163–78, and Īraj Afshār, *Sair-i Kitāb dar Īrān*.

15234), the Nationalbibliothek, Vienna (Flügel, 639), the India Office Library (Ethé, 901), and the Bodleian Library (Elliot 327), this last having been presented by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh to Sir Gore Ouseley. Lastly we must note a very remarkable *Shāhnāma* which used to be in the collection of Dr Vesal of Shīrāz, and was an heirloom in his family. The miniatures are dated between 1270/1854 and 1280/1864, and most of them are signed by the celebrated Shīrāz artist Luṭf ʿAlī Khān (pl. 34*a*), but one or two are by Dāvarī and Farhang, sons of the poet Viṣāl (or Vesal), the late owner's ancestor. Some of them are of startling originality.

Luṭf ʿAlī Khān was chiefly, and justly, famed for his flower-paintings, a favourite branch of the miniaturist's art since Safavid times; they were as a rule executed as separate album-pictures (pl. 34*b*). His work appears in lacquer as well as miniature painting.[53] He had an eminent predecessor in the field in the person of Muḥammad Hādī (pl. 35*a*), whom Claudius Rich met as a very old man at Shīrāz in 1821, calling him "the Iranian Van Huysum". "I found him an extremely polite, intelligent, gentlemanlike old man", proceeds Rich; "He is full of the spirit of his art, and is passionately fond of flowers."[54] Flower-painters were, indeed, numerous in the Zand and Qājār periods, and their designs were among the most popular on enamels and lacquer. But their best work is in miniature-painting, sometimes applied to the decoration of manuscripts, where it attains an unrivalled delicacy and beauty.

One other considerable class of separate miniature paintings calls for attention. This consists mostly of single figures illustrating Persian types, costumes, manners, and so on, painted on a plain background (pls. 35*b*, 36*a*). The parallels provided by "Company Painting" in India and the "Rice-paper paintings" of Canton have already been mentioned. In all these groups genuine native styles of painting are simplified and modified in order to make them acceptable to European purchasers, thereby constituting a sort of superior "tourist art". In Persia they were evidently a profitable line; as Sir William Ouseley wrote, "Of pictures very neatly executed in water-colours, on leaves of paper either separate, or collected into books, many hundreds were brought for inspection to our tents, and offered daily for sale in the shops of Isfahan. Among these I found several interesting, as portraits of remarkable personages; and others as they illustrated manners and customs, representing scenes of frequent occurrence in domestick life . . . . but of several offered for sale, those most highly finished

[53] See Donald N. Wilber, *Persian Gardens*, figs. 3 (dated 1269/1852) and 4 (dated 1274/1857). For a good flower miniature, see pl. 34*b*.

[54] Claudius James Rich, *Narrative of a Residence in Koordistan* II, p. 224.

were unfortunately of such a description as precludes any further notice."[55] Actually, the erotic or pornographic element in Persian art, compared with that of, say, India or Japan, is very small indeed.[56]

The remainder of the period, subsequent to the death of Ṣanīᶜ al-Mulk in 1866, does not call for extended treatment. One of the distinctions conferred by Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh on that pre-eminent artist had been the supervision of the painting department of the recently founded Dār al-Funūn, or Polytechnic, intended by the King – himself no mean artist (pl. 36*b*) – for the instruction of Persian painters in the European style. The most successful among its early alumni was Ismaᶜīl Jalāᵓir, a great favourite of the Shah and a painter in oils of talent and originality. His style was meticulous, thoroughly Europeanized on the surface, but fundamentally Persian, and tinged with a sort of gentle melancholy. Only three of his pictures, so far as is known, have been seen in Europe: a group of ladies round a samovar, in the Victoria and Albert Museum;[57] Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac (Ismāᶜīl) averted, formerly in the Schulz collection;[58] and a wholly delighful oil-painting, entirely in monochrome, of the handsome young dervish Nūr ᶜAlī Shāh in a luxuriant landscape surrounded by animals and birds (private collection) (pl. 37). But a number of others can be seen in Persian collections, especially the Gulistān Palace and the Museum of Decorative Arts, including a portrait of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh dated 1279/1863.

Jaᶜfar was a very competent portraitist of the same period, and has left two good portraits of the King, the one full-face, seated in his robes (Gulistān Palace), and the other in monochrome, also full-face, but on horseback, dated 1291/1874 (Museum of Decorative Arts, Tehran). But the most notable figure in Persian painting of the later 19th century was Muḥammad Ghaffārī, nephew of Ṣanīᶜ al-Mulk, who is usually known by his title of Kamāl al-Mulk ("Perfection of the Kingdom") which he received in 1892. He was born at Kāshān in 1848, and studied at the Dār al-Funūn. At the end of the century he spent five years in Europe, and opened an art-school of his own in 1911, after his return. He lived to the great age of 92, and rests in a magnificent tomb adjoining those of Farīd al-Dīn ᶜAṭṭār and ᶜUmar Khayyām on the outskirts of Nīshāpūr. His mature style is dignified and impressive, but completely Europeanized, and many examples of

[55] Ouseley, vol. III, p. 68.

[56] See Sir Thomas Arnold, *Painting in Islam*, pp. 84–8. There are one or two examples in the Pozzi Collection at the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, Geneva (Catalogue nos. 208–12), and a number have been gathered together in Robert Surieu, *Sarv e Naz* (Geneva, Paris and Munich, 1967).

[57] No. P.56–1941. This painting was shown at Burlington House in 1931 (Catalogue no. 875) when it was dated a century too early. It was lent to the exhibition by Lady Clerk, who had obtained it in the Istanbul bazaar, and gave it to the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1941.

[58] Schulz, vol. I, Taf.F.; Schulz mistook the signature for the subject.

both portraits and landscapes can be seen in various Persian public collections; a fine large portrait of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh in the Firuz collection is noteworthy (pl. 38*b*). Mīrzā Maḥmūd Khān (1813–93) was Malik al-Shuʿarā, or Poet Laureate, towards the end of Nāṣir al-Dīn's long reign, but he was also a skilled painter in a photographic style closely imitating European methods of rendering light and shade. A striking painting of his, dated 1308/1890, of two men seated by candlelight, was exhibited at Burlington House in 1931 (pl. 39).[59] He has also left a number of extremely realistic views of the royal palaces and gardens.

In the art of painted lacquer the Imāmī family of Iṣfahān rose to great prominence in the second half of the 19th century. Riżā al-Imāmī executed the finest piece of lacquer in the Victoria and Albert Museum collection, a mirror-case with richly massed flowers and gold scroll-work made specially for the Paris Exhibition of 1867 (No. 922–1869) (pl. 68). Muḥammad al-Ḥusainī al-Imāmī was an excellent lacquer artist in traditional style during the 1870s, but had painted a portrait of Nāṣir al-Dīn as early as 1845, when the latter was still heir-apparent; he attained the rank of naqqāsh-bāshī. Another Imāmī who reached the same distinction was Naṣr-Allāh, who was very fond of introducing hazel-nuts into his lacquer designs. Fatḥ-Allāh of Shīrāz is yet another lacquer painter of great distinction during the later 19th century, working in a Europeanized style reminiscent sometimes of English mid-Victorian painted papier-mâché, with its black background and delicate gold scroll-work (pl. 40). Two more artists in lacquer whose work extends into the present century, and who both enjoyed the title of Ṣanīʿ Humāyūn ("The Royal Painter"), were ʿAbd al-Laṭīf and ʿAbd al-Ḥusain; the work of both is of very high quality, but of markedly European character.

After the death of Muḥammad Kāẓim, the eldest son of Najaf, about 1885, the art of enamel painting declined, and the same is true of lithographed book-illustrations. Persian book-illustrators were unable to adapt the technique to the more strongly Europeanized style then in vogue. Meanwhile miniature-painting dwindled into a sterile imitation of Safavid prototypes, chiefly of the school of Riżā ʿAbbāsī. These imitations were at first far from convincing, but as time went on they achieved a more authentic look, and the line between conscientious pastiche and deliberate forgery is often a difficult one to draw. The Imāmī family, in particular, seems to have specialized in covering the blank pages of 15th- and 16th-century manuscripts with miniatures in what they imagined was

[59] Catalogue no. 803, where the two men are named as Muḥammad Ḥusain Khān (with a pipe) and Muḥammad Qāsim Khān, son of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's poet laureate. The painting is in the Gulistān Palace collection).

the style of the time, the designs being not infrequently copied from reproductions of Persian miniatures in European publications.[60] However some remarkably fine and often original work has been, and perhaps is still being, produced by modern Persian miniaturists, amongst whom Rustam Shīrāzī and a latter-day Bihzād are perhaps the most noteworthy.[61]

It will therefore be permissible to close here this brief survey of painting and the associated arts under the Zands and Qājārs. Though admittedly much inferior work has survived to give the period a bad name till quite recently, it is not by that that the art should be judged. We do not assess English painting on the works of the pavement-artists of Hyde Park Corner or Trafalgar Square. A balanced consideration of the best painting of the 18th and 19th centuries will surely result in the firm establishement of Mīrzā Bābā, Mihr ʿAlī, Ṣanīʿ al-Mulk, and others who have earned an honourable mention in the foregoing account, in the very respectable position they deserve in the history of Persian painting. They were true to their art, they were representative of their period, and they were a credit to their country.

[60] See, for example, Messrs Christies Catalogue, 28, vi, 1973, Lot 215, a Niẓāmī written in 1527 with miniatures founded on those in Shāh Ṭahmāsp's manuscript (British Museum Or. 2265) probably added shortly after the publication of Laurence Binyon's "Poems of Nizami" in 1928.

[61] See B.W. Robinson, "Some modern Persian Miniatures". Modern miniatures have not infrequently been reproduced in colour on the covers of *Hunar va Mardum*, and occasional articles on modern miniaturists can also be found in the same periodical.

CHAPTER 24

THE ARTS OF THE EIGHTEENTH TO TWENTIETH CENTURIES

ARCHITECTURE

Introduction

"At a distance, Tehran, built in great part of the mud on which it stands, is only distinguished from the surrounding plain by the green trees of its many gardens; but as the traveller gets nearer he will see the outline of the castellated city wall and the tiled domes and minarets of mosques. He will enter the town by a grandiose gateway adorned with glazed bricks in patterns, the prevailing tones being blue and yellow relieved with black and white, the whole giving a touch of splendour to its squalid surroundings. These gateways are twelve in number; some are adorned with the exploits of Rustum, the Hercules and knight-errant of Persia, and others depict the Persian soldier of today".[1] This picture of Tehran, as drawn by Ella Sykes in 1894, is an appropriately evocative introduction to the architecture of the period since it is the buildings which give the city its unfamiliar exotic appearance. Her account is one of the more sympathetic of the many written in tones ranging from wonder, disparagement and sarcasm to sober assessment by the Europeans who visited Tehran since it became Iran's capital in 1786. Most 19th-century Persian cities of any size presented a similar architectural pattern. City sites tended to have a long history of occupation. A harsh terrain and climate severely limited areas of settlement; communication difficulties in a large country made it essential that a city was sited in a good strategic position, preferably on a trade route; proximity to a water supply was vital near foothills whose water-tables would feed *qanāt*s. Such factors generated an intensity of urbanization which is reflected in architecture, for it is in the towns that the major experiments and developments in both religious and secular buildings are found. Outside a city's limits architecture tended to be isolated and sparse. Outside Tehran were found the summer residences of the Qājārs though by modern standards the distances involved were small and most

[1] Ella Sykes, *Persia and its People*, pp. 45–46.

of these buildings today fall within the boundaries of the modern city. Other noteworthy buildings outside a city were service units to aid communication: caravansarais and bridges constructed at intervals along standard routes. The evidence of the many substantial buildings which have survived, especially of the Qājār period, would indicate that Persia enjoyed a reasonable urban life. Apart from the capital, cities such as Tabrīz, Mashhad, Iṣfahān, Shīrāz and Kirmān prospered through their positions as trading centres and places of pilgrimage. This is attested by the numbers of surviving buildings. To a certain extent the plans of these towns conformed to the scheme considered traditional to the Islamic city. They were divided into distinct quarters confined within a retaining fortified wall pierced by gates (pl. 41*a*). The royal quarter with its palace and/or citadel was also the nucleus of administration (see p. 545, fig. 1), while the bazaar area and the residential districts were composed of a maze of winding streets and alleys. Each quarter would be served by its own religious buildings – mosques, *madrasas*; religious minorities would be segregated as the clearly defined Armenian and Jewish quarters respectively at Iṣfahān and Shīrāz indicate. It would be incorrect, however, to assume that these cities lacked any elements of spacious town planning or that the Zands and Qājārs did not develop them. Safavid Iṣfahān, usually quoted as the supreme example of Persian town planning, was not an isolated case. Tabrīz in the late 17th century had an impressive *maidān* larger than that of Iṣfahān.[2] Shāh ʿAbbās I had built a long avenue running northwest and southeast of Imām Riżā's shrine at Mashhad. Imām Qulī Khān, governor of Shīrāz, had built an avenue along the Iṣfahān road and a palace in the maidān, and Ganj ʿAlī Khān, governor of Kirmān, had built an imposing complex of madrasa, bath and bazaar set round a maidān.

The Zands and Qājārs followed this well-established tradition of town planning with their own programmes sponsored either by the ruler himself or members of his extensive family who held important state positions or provincial governorships. In the 18th century the most prominent example is that of Muḥammad Karīm Khān Zand (1750–79), who inaugurated an ambitious architectural programme in Shīrāz, consisting of a maidān with accompanying buildings of a walled *arg*, palace, and a complex of mosque, bazaar and *ḥammām*. The Qājārs continued, beginning with Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh (1797–1834), who extended the Gulistān Palace at Tehran, rebuilt the city's walls, undertook extensive constructions to Imām Riżā's shrine at Mashhad, and sponsored a

[2] Lockhart, p. 14.

programme of building at Kāshān, Simnān, Qazvīn and Zanjān. His son Muḥammad ʿAlī Mīrzā, governor of Kirmānshāh, is credited with having spent large sums to rebuild and beautify the town. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh (1848–96), however, sponsored the most extensive building programme of the Qājārs when he initiated the reconstruction of Tehran in 1867. Although he greatly extended the city he in some ways maintained tradition. The fortified mud brick walls which had graced Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's Tehran were pulled down and the city's boundaries extended. The walls were replaced at a greater distance by another series of brick bastions forming an octagonal enclosure eleven miles in circumference, surrounded by a moat and pierced by twelve tiled gates. While his concept was not original the way in which it was carried out was. The bastions, begun by General Buhler in 1867 and completed in 1871–2, were modelled on Vauban's system for the fortification of Paris. The main quarters of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's new Tehran presented imposing vistas of maidāns, entered by impressive tiled gates, on to which the porticos of religious buildings and large houses opened. The area of the Gulistān Palace was greatly extended and rebuilt.[3] Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's architectural ambitions were not only confined to Tehran. Both Qazvīn and Simnān have impressive tiled gateways remaining from a system which clearly imitated the battlements of the capital. Like his grandfather Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, he also contributed to established religious shrines; he completed a new court at Imām Riżā's shrine at Mashhad and the greater part of the shrine of Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm at Rayy dates from his reign.

Sufficient buildings survive from the building programme of the two major Qājār rulers to enable a balanced assessment of their architectural achievement to be formed. If they are studied objectively without any prejudiced assumption that the 19th century was decadent, both in form and technique, much that is attractively planned and well-constructed will be found. The major obstacle at present to a comprehensive evaluation of both Zand and Qājār architecture is that, through the neglect which they have suffered, available scattered material has to be collected so that they may be analyzed and compared. Four major groups of source material have to be used.

1. *European literary sources.* Persia was visited since medieval times by European visitors of various professions and interests – diplomats, merchants, technical experts. Their numbers, increased in the 17th century through the encouragement of Shāh ʿAbbās I, receded during the turbulent events of the

[3] Curzon, vol. 1, pp. 305–311.

18th century, and expanded again after the establishment of contact between the Persian court and England and France at the beginning of the 19th century. Many of them published accounts of their experiences in Persia which yield much fascinating and varied information. These accounts range from personal memoirs to detailed scholarly works and official papers such as consular reports and gazetteers. Concerning architecture many of these accounts at least mention buildings and their locations; and are thus valuable records where the buildings no longer exist. The best accounts identify patrons and attempt to date and describe buildings and relate them to their environment. Here they are especially useful for complex buildings with a continuous history of additions and alterations, such as the Gulistān Palace: the dates at which a visitor mentions certain structures enable a chronological sequence at least to be outlined. The accounts are less valuable for analysis of the elements of a building and the details of decoration and often function can be misinterpreted. This is not surprising when it is recalled that foreigners were discouraged from entering religious buildings and relatively few had any opportunity of visiting private houses.

2. *European illustrative sources.* These may be divided into two groups: (a) Drawings, lithographs, sketches etc. These illustrated travel accounts in varying degrees of skill and accuracy. Interpretations of buildings range from romantic impressions of crumbling ruins against impressive mountain or desert backgrounds to meticulously drawn views, plans and elevations. (b) Photographs. From the mid 19th century onwards a new technique was added to the repertoire of illustrative methods – that of photography, which opened up possibilities of more objective recording. Evidence has emerged to show that photography was used to record aspects of Iran since the 1860s. Here the earliest yet known photographs are those contained in the album of the Italian diplomatic mission of 1862.[4] They include views of buildings, some of which are still standing while others have long since disappeared. The photograph really came into its own in the late 19th century when it was used to illustrate the travel accounts written during that period. They naturally vary in quality but at best can usefully be checked against a surviving building. One of the most interesting of the 19th-century photographers was Ernst Hoeltzer who was employed by the Persian Telegraph Department from 1863 until his retirement in 1890. Apart from some periods of leave in his native Germany he spent his life in Iṣfahān

[4] Piemontese, "The photographic album".

where he died in 1911. From about 1874 onwards he photographed Iṣfahān from all angles of its life and environment.[5] His photographs of architecture are carefully observed studies composed to reveal the structure and features of buildings.

3. *Persian literary sources.* A great quantity of literary material survives from the 19th century which needs to be assessed. The most promising sources here are works of history, geography, biography, autobiography and travel, published in lithographed editions. As yet few of these texts have been critically edited and indexed so that they have to be patiently searched for references. The histories are classifiable as general and local, of which the latter may often contain references to buildings within the region under discussion. In this type of literature the distinction between history and geography becomes less clear as many of the works include much local gazetteer information. One of the best examples of this type of work is the *Fārs-nāma-yi Nāṣirī* of Ḥasan-i Fasāʾī, an historical treatise of Fārs province which also includes much geographical description, progressing from the beginning of the Islamic era to 1882. Topographical dictionaries may also provide information. From the many which exist, five major works of Iʿtimād al-Salṭana may be quoted as examples, since his prolific output crossed the boundaries of all categories. His four volumes of the *Miʾrāt al-Buldān*, published between 1876 and 1880, contain the mixture of a geographical dictionary of Persian towns and a chronicle in calendar form of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's reign. A similar calendar of events is included in his *Muntaẓam-i Nāṣirī* written between 1881 and 1883. Both works are useful for references to building dates included in the calendar sections. His third major work the *Maṭlaʿal-Shams*, published in three volumes 1884–6, is basically an account of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's pilgrimage to Mashhad. It is in fact much more since it includes full descriptions of the towns of Khurāsān visited on both outward and return journeys, and a most detailed account of Mashhad and its monuments. Its importance as an architectural source is self-evident. His fourth work *Kitāb al-Maʾāṡir vaʾl-Āṡār*, published in 1888, is an invaluable reference work on the events of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's reign down to the date of publication and includes notes of building programmes. His last work to be mentioned here strikes a more personal note as it is his diary,[6] a voluminous compilation recording tersely the events of each day and the places that he visited. From an

[5] Ernst Hoeltzer (1835–1911) worked in Iṣfahān as Assistant Superintendant in charge of the Persian Telegraph Department branch office there from 1871 to 1890; during his career and after retirement he photographed many aspects of Iṣfahān's life and environment including the *taʿziya* play. Selections of his photographs have been published in Scarce, "Isfahan in camera".

[6] Marāghī, *Rūznāma-yi Khāṭirāt-i Iʿtimād al-salṭana.*

architectural point of view it is useful in showing the frequency and seasonal nature of the building in use at the time.

4. *Persian archival sources.* Another type of Persian documentary source which is beginning to be made more accessible are the *vaqf-nāma*s – foundation charters of religious buildings.[7] Among the endowments and conditions listed in such documents the circumstances and date of building can be found. The buildings themselves, however, are ultimately the main sources. Ideally each one should be exhaustively described, catalogued and planned and its inscriptions transcribed and translated as a foundation for any assessment of its importance and place in the development of Persian architecture. This approach, while essential, does have its drawbacks because the building can only be recorded in its present condition after possibly a long history of alteration and rebuilding. Direct observation of the building must therefore be supported by a study of the literary and illustrative sources.

Techniques and materials of building and decoration

For the construction and planning of their buildings the Zands and Qājārs had Persia's centuries-old tradition upon which to draw and in general they chose to develop it rather than introduce drastic innovations. Since rather more information is available for this period concerning the materials and techniques of architecture and labour organization it may be summarized here before discussion of the buildings themselves. The process of building required the skills of various specialist craftsmen who had learnt them as apprentices and were organized into guilds – *aṣnāf.* Although knowledge concerning Persian guilds is incomplete, they were apparently urban organizations of groups of craftsmen engaged in the same trade or craft, who elected their own chief and paid guild taxes. Guilds were vital units of Persian economic life and membership was obligatory for any aspiring craftsman or trader. Progress within a guild began with the *pādau* – a child recruit employed on simple craft techniques and to run errands etc. He progressed to the *shāgird* (apprentice) stage when he spent a variable period of time learning the craft before being eligible, after gaining the head of his guild's permission and on payment to him of a sum of money, to become an *ustād* – master – with his own shop. Although theoretically guild membership was open to all, in practice it tended to become hereditary since sons followed in their fathers' trade or craft rather than face the expense of

[7] For example the *vaqf* documents of Iṣfahān published in Sipantā, *Tārīkhcha-yi auqāf-i Iṣfahān.*

branching out into new enterprises. From the somewhat scattered and uneven evidence available it is clear that the building crafts were organized into guilds.

Here one of the most valuable sources is the *Jughrāfiyā-yi Iṣfahān* of Mīrzā Ḥusain, begun in 1877 and finished in 1891. Mīrzā Ḥusain was an employee of the Iṣfahān Telegraph Office. His knowledge of Iṣfahān was thorough and among the numerous guilds which he lists, he includes the following connected with architecture and its decoration: *miʿmār* – architects; *bannāʾī* – masons, divided in turn into bricklayers and the more highly specialized plasterers who made elaborate decorations of carved and moulded stucco; *najjār* – carpenters; *ḥajjār* – stonecutters; *fakhkhār* – potters, who included *kāshīsāz* – tilemakers; and finally unskilled labourers and construction workers and others – *ʿamala va bannāʾī va ghairahu*.[8] This range of craftsmen would seem to be typical of any Persian city where building operations flourished. Mīrzā Ḥusain does imply, however, that the building industry had declined in Iṣfahān when he emphasizes the small number of craftsmen compared with former times. The most probable reason for this decline was the attraction of workmen to Tehran, which since 1867 had provided many more new construction projects. Even here, however, the number engaged in architecture was comparatively small; out of an estimated total of 29,000 working inhabitants only some 2,500 were masons and labourers.

The process of construction began with the architect's design. Irritatingly little information has survived about the training and practice of the architect's profession in Qājār Persia, but it appears that he experienced no broad theoretical and practical training including subjects such as history of architecture. Generally his skills and outlook were based on practical knowledge gained by following the examples of the master craftsmen to whom he had been apprenticed. This did not mean that his buildings were necessarily faulty – many Qājār buildings are well-planned and constructed – but that he was conservatively traditional and absorbed new influences slowly.[9] Evidence shows that he had a portfolio of designs and plans; a collection of architectural drawings, designs and sketches exists which belonged to Mīrzā Akbar, court architect. These were acquired after his death from two *ustāds* (master masons) to the Persian court, Khudādād and Akbar, presumably members of Mīrzā Akbar's staff, by C. Purdom Clarke, Superintendant of Her Britannic Majesty's Works in Persia, in

[8] Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, Persian text, pp. 111–12, 121.

[9] This situation was not unique to Persia. In Britain, for example, architecture only separated from the building trade as a distinct profession with the foundation of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1830.

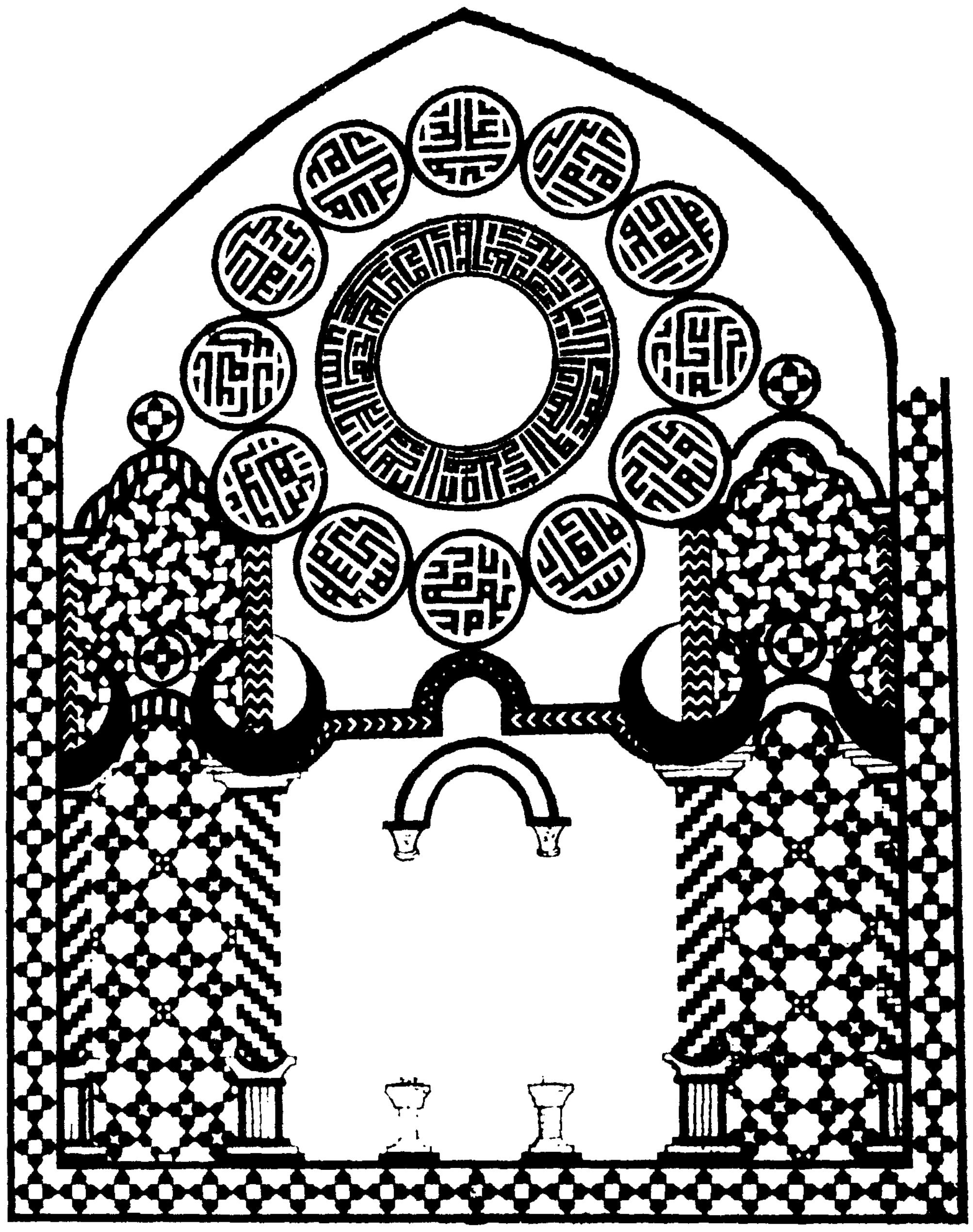


Fig. 1 Mīrzā Akbar's portfolio. Design for mosaic tile miḥrāb.

1876.[10] The portfolio consists of a miscellany of ink drawings of plans of buildings, schemes for groin and stalactite vaults, designs for patterns in tilework and carved and moulded stucco, together forming an invaluable repertoire of Qājār taste (figs. 1–3). Assuming that Purdom Clarke acquired the drawings at Mīrzā Akbar's death or shortly after, and from a comparison of the style of the designs for tile and stucco with those found in contemporary buildings, the portfolio was in use from c. 1845 to 1875. There are, however, some designs for inscriptions dated 1827[11] which may indicate that the portfolio had been built up over several generations. Altogether there are four sheets of ground plans for buildings drawn in black ink on squared paper. They all seem to be schemes for buildings on a square or rectangular plan (fig. 4) filled with rows of supporting columns, or open courts lined with interconnecting series of rooms; some of the plans include a central octagonal kiosk. The plans do not specify scale or elevation and lack indication of where domes and vaults were to

[10] Mīrzā Akbar, *A collection of architectural drawings, designs and sketches.*
[11] Mīrzā Akbar, sheet 48.

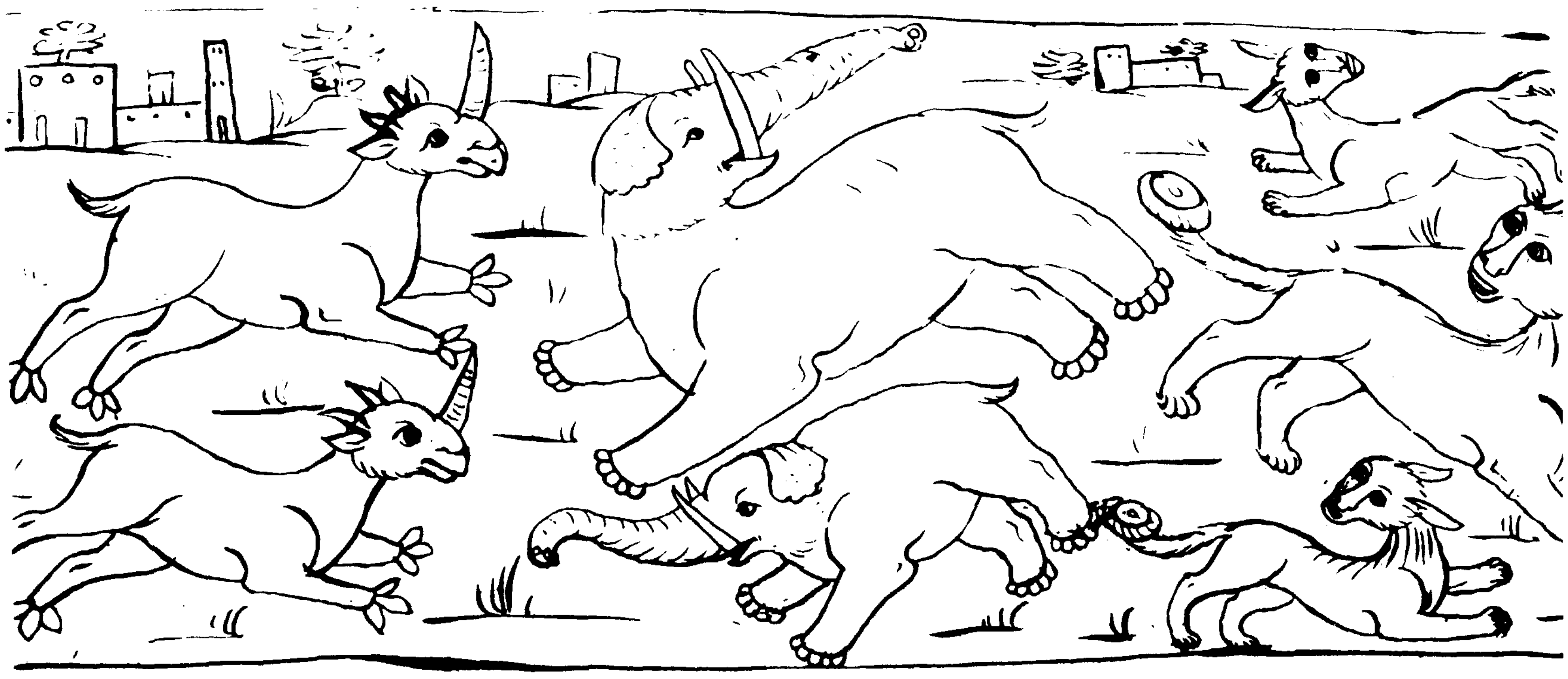


Fig. 2 Mīrzā Akbar's portfolio. Design of elephants and unicorns for polychrome painted tilework.



Fig. 3 Mīrzā Akbar's portfolio. Floral moulded and carved stucco panel.

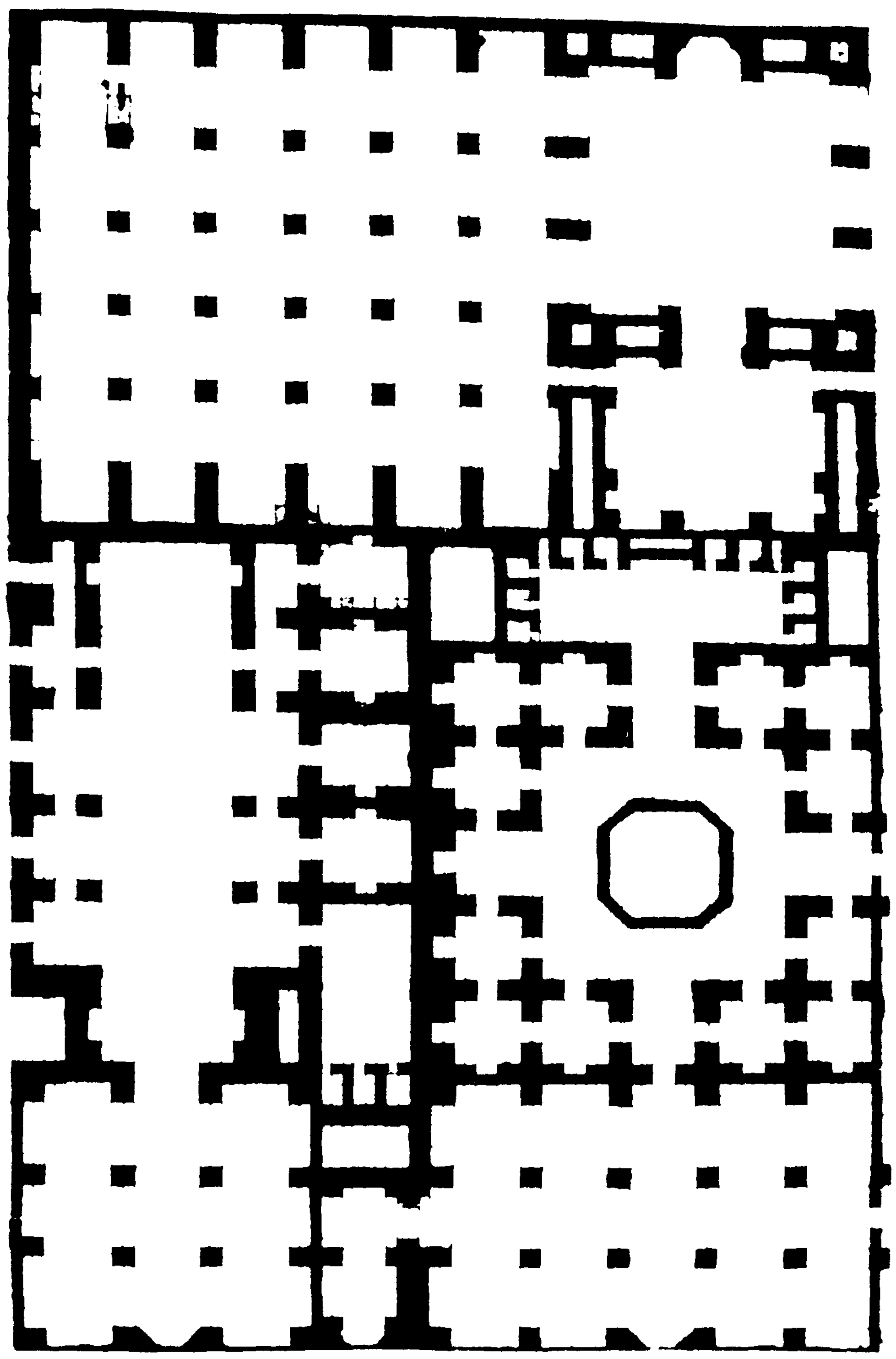


Fig. 4 Mīrzā Akbar's portfolio. Ground plans for buildings with columns and open courts.

be incorporated or how many storeys and levels were required. Obviously they must be regarded as working drawings of specific architectural units which could be fully interpreted by a craftsman who had a long practical experience of what was structurally possible. Using this repertoire of architectural units, which were interchangeable in both religious and secular buildings, the architect could combine them in a final plan of his choice. Traditionally the plan would have been drawn up *in situ* by marking out the walls with powdered lime following the master chart. It should be stressed, however, that such plans would only have been prepared for large-scale religious, royal and public buildings. In the case of more modest domestic architecture a local builder would begin by marking out the site according to schemes which he had committed to memory.

After the plan had been decided the first step in any construction was the

digging of foundation trenches along the lines of the walls. The trenches were then filled with large stones bonded by a mud and lime plaster, the task of the guild of unskilled labourers. Once this had settled and hardened building proper could begin. Although there was, and is, much more regional variation in Persian architecture than has been credited, the principal building material was brick. Persia has plentiful supplies of stone, but difficulties of quarrying and transportation restricted its use in architecture to decorative material mainly used for elaborately carved dadoes running round the lower walls of a courtyard or room. Brick occurred in many forms ranging from simple rammed earth lumps, mainly used for the retaining walls of gardens and orchards, through the sun-dried mud and straw bricks of village houses to the more technically sophisticated and durable kiln-fired bricks of large-scale religious and civic buildings, made up of a sand and clay mixture shaped into squares and baked in kilns situated on the outskirts of a town. At this stage the masons took over and built up walls in neat courses of brick bonded with a lime and sand mortar. Brick courses were left unadorned, worked into patterned bonds, or covered with surface decoration of polychrome tile, stone dado, carved stucco and painted fresco – all the work of specialist craftsmen. The roofing of a building presented few problems and varied according to region. In the Caspian region with its heavy rainfall, roofs of overlapping shingles were constructed. Elsewhere a combination of wooden beams overlaid with straw matting and boards covered with layers of mud, plaster and lime mixture, or brick domes and vaults were used, depending on the type of building and area to be covered. As with walls, ceilings and domes could be decorated with tiles, stucco and painted fresco.

Both religious and secular architecture owed much of its impact to decoration. Here one of the most frequently employed techniques was polychrome ceramic tilework, mainly produced in Qājār times in Tehran, Shīrāz and Iṣfahān. Three basic techniques were used:

1. Mosaic in which geometrical designs were worked in square or rectangular pieces of turquoise, white, yellow and black tile.
2. Overglaze painted "*cuerda seca*". Here increasingly elaborate patterns were painted in a vivid palette of pink, purple, yellow, shades of blue, green, and orange in a meticulous enamelled style.
3. Underglaze painting in which a more subtle arrangement of colours, modified by the use of black for shading and outlining, was only used from about 1880 onwards.

Tilework was used to emphasize structure. This is particularly noticeable in religious architecture where bands and panels of tilework were used to decorate

the entrances and *aivān*s of mosques and madrasas. In Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's buildings both mosaic and cuerda seca techniques are blended in a harmonious manner; mosaic panels in fine geometric patterns were used for verticals (pl. 43*b*) and to outline and adorn the facets of *muqarnas* (stalactites), and to surface domes. Cuerda seca tiles in graceful compositions, including rose and iris motifs (pl. 41*b*) and arabesque foliage, were used to cover arch spandrels and surfaces where bands and panels of clear pattern would be seen to best effect. The religious buildings of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's reign continued in this tradition but employed a much more extensive range of designs. Mosaic tiling continued in geometrical patterns but cuerda seca was enlivened by the use of such motifs as bouquets and vases of abundant roses and groups of fruit – grapes, melon, pomegranates – all framed in garlands and drapery swags. The whole style has a decidedly Victorian flavour, which is heightened by the intrusion of such motifs as scenes of European landscapes obviously copied from imported contemporary postcards and magazine illustrations.[12] Probably the most extraordinary use of tilework in a religious building is seen in the *takya* of Muʿāvin al-Mulk at Kirmānshāh decorated with large panels of cuerda seca tiles, which depict a sequence of events from the *taʿziya* drama and Ṣūfī themes; in the composition and use of colour they are treated as paintings. Also included are portrait tiles of local, civil and religious dignitaries worked in a hatched and stippled technique in black on white, obviously influenced by lithographs and photographs (pl. 42).[13]

The tilework of secular buildings was used to panel façades, as in the Gulistān Palace,[14] to line courtyards and form decorative interior friezes, as in some of the late Qājār houses of Shīrāz, and to adorn city gates. This tilework shared the floral landscape designs of religious buildings, but more opportunity was offered for narrative scenes worked in cuerda seca technique on a large scale and resulting in poster-like images using colours applied either in clear washes or in varying depths of intensity. Themes included subjects from popular literature such as Rustam combatting the White Dīv boldly splashed across the central pediment of Simnān's city gate, and contemporary subjects ranging from a full-scale portrait of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh on horseback decorating the façade of the Bāgh-i Iram to the realistically depicted soldiers in combat in World War I which feature on Tehran's Darvāza-yi Bāgh-i Millī (pl. 43*a*). Underglaze painted tiles are best seen in the friezes within the main vestibules of the Gulistān palace and lining the walls of the reception salon at Salṭanatābād (pl. 43*c*). Here treated in a hatched and shaded naturalistic style, they depict such events as Nāṣir al-Dīn

[12] Fine examples of such tilework can be seen in the Masjid-i Sipahsālār in Tehran.

[13] For the importance of photography in Persia see Piemontese, pp. 261–2.

[14] Scarce, "The tile decoration at the Gulestan Palace".

Shāh listening to a piano recital (pl. 44*a*) or reviewing his troops, groups of European women in fashionable dress, and a later series of Parthian and Sasanian kings inspired by coins and lithograph illustrations.[15]

Stone was used comparatively sparingly as architectural decoration in the form of slabs of cream coloured limestone or greenish marble, either supplied in Shīrāz from the nearby mountains or brought in from Āẕarbāījān or Yazd. The slabs were generally made up into dadoes running along the façades of courts of both religious and secular buildings, ornamented with designs carved in fine shallow relief or openwork. In the Masjid-i Sipahsālār at Tehran these dadoes were carved with highly wrought floral designs (pl. 44*b*). At Shīrāz a more delicate patten using iris and rose motifs was favoured. An interesting local development confined to Shīrāz was the copying of figure scenes from the Achaemenid reliefs of Persepolis, notably the processions of servants seen in the palaces of Darius and Xerxes.

Glass was used in three principal ways. First, stained glass was made up of insets of red, blue, emerald, and yellow set within openwork wood panels used for fanlights and sliding sash windows (pl. 45*a*). Here the Ḥusainīya Amīnī of Qazvīn is notable because a stained glass rose window is also painted with the twelve zodiac symbols. Secondly, mirrorwork mosaic, a technique used in late Safavid times to sheath a surface, was fully developed in the Qājār period. It was used to cover the inner surface of an aivān or *tālār* as, for example, in the shrine of Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm at Rayy, and the reception area of the Nirangistān at Shīrāz, while the inner chamber of Shāh Chirāgh at Shīrāz is completely lined with it. Thirdly, in domestic architecture friezes of repeating floral and scroll patterns were inlaid in pieces of colourless, red, green and blue glass against a smooth white stucco ground. Stucco in its own right as a form of architectural decoration has a long history in Persia. In Qājār times, especially during the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, it became a highly elaborate means of decorating the ceilings (pl. 45*b*), walls and fireplaces of domestic architecture and was moulded in prominent relief in a repertoire of designs closely resembling those of contemporary tilework; thus ornate bouquets and bowls or roses and medallions containing fruit and bird motifs are found contained within foliage.

The last important means of architectural decoration is painting, which was used mainly in domestic interiors. On ceilings a mosaic of interlocking wooden shapes, painted with still-life compositions, landscapes, groups of Victorian women, and traditional motifs such as a lion and snake in combat all framed in

[15] For a discussion of one of the craftsmen who made tiles in this technique see Scarce, "Ali Mohammad Isfahani – tilemaker of Tehran".

rose foliage and ribbon strapwork, was constructed. Alternatively a ceiling of horizontal wooden beams would be painted with such designs.[16] The parallels with motifs used in tilework and stucco are obvious. When used as wall decoration, painting was employed in panels based on flower and bird compositions, and also in large figure scenes, which may be regarded as paintings in their own right rather than as architectural accessories (pls. 16, 17, 19).

The Zand Period 1750–94

At present disappointingly little of 18th-century Persian architecture has been identified. This situation is understandable, however, when it is remembered that for most of the century after the fall of the Safavids in 1722, Persia was in a state of political chaos and civil war and only partly stabilized in the Zand interregnum (1750–94): patrons who would have sponsored large-scale construction programmes were preoccupied. It is not until the reign of the first Zand ruler, Muḥammad Karīm Khān (1750–79), that some patterns of 18th-century architecture can be seen. Both the length and relative stability of his reign encouraged the construction of significant buildings, but only in places where he held sway. Karīm Khān began his building in Tehran, which he occupied in 1759–60. He had the walls of the town and of the citadel or Arg rebuilt by a celebrated architect, Ustād Ghulām Riżā Tabrīzī. Within the Arg he constructed an audience chamber, administrative and private quarters. He did not further these schemes because, after defeating the Qājārs, he made Shīrāz his capital. His buildings in Tehran having been absorbed by reconstruction programmes of the 19th and 20th centuries, the architecture of his reign must be sought in Shīrāz. Surviving buildings must however be treated with reserve; they have been much altered and repaired, and also damaged by earthquakes. Yet sufficient remains to show that Karīm Khān planned his buildings as units within an all-embracing city plan. Shīrāz was traditionally famous for its open appearance and gardens. Karīm Khān's plan catered for this harmony of space (see p. 101, fig. 1).

Twenty-seven constructions in Shīrāz, of which sixteen remain today, are attributed to Karīm Khān Zand, both complete buildings and buildings which he extended and restored.[17] The range is an impressive witness to his energy – mosques, administrative and secular buildings, palaces, baths, commercial buildings such as bazaars, civil engineering projects such as drainage channels,

[16] Brisch, "Ein Persisches Deckenbild von 1846".   [17] Bihrūzī, pp. 14–15.

moats, bridges, fortifications, water reservoirs and gardens. The buildings to be discussed here are those concentrated in the centre of Karīm Khān's plan. He built an imposing square or maidān with his citadel or Arg and palace, mosque and bazaar grouped around it. Today the maidān no longer exists and its former site is traversed by the large Karīm Khān Zand boulevard, which runs on a northwest–southeast axis bisecting his bazaar. The maidān was still in existence in 1802 as Waring comments on it,[18] and also in 1889, when Curzon visited Shīrāz. Curzon remarks "one face of the palace fronts the principal Meidan which is a desolate expanse containing a number of guns"[19] and "From the Meidan access is gained to the Bazaar-i-vekil or Regent's bazaar, an enduring monument of the public spirited rule of Kerim Khan."[20] A combination of his evidence with the positions of surviving buildings in the centre of Shīrāz makes it clear that they were mainly situated on the northeast and south sides of the maidān.

The maidān was dominated by the Arg which stands today much altered.[21] Its exact date of construction is uncertain but it is surely one of the earliest buildings begun and completed, and one of the best preserved examples of urban fortifications in Persia.[22] The basic plan is simple. It consists of a large enclosure 80 yards square with a circular tower at each corner rising to twice the height of the retaining wall. On a foundation of stones the walls and towers are built of close-packed courses of several thicknesses of narrow fired bricks of a high standard of workmanship. The walls and towers are pierced at their upper level with small arched apertures. The practical and functional quality of the exterior is enlivened by the use of brick ornament (pl. 46*a*). Karīm Khān's builders were following a tradition established in Persian architecture since Saljūq times when variations in direction and depth of relief of courses were used to avoid the monotony of a plain brick surface. Here the decorative effect is achieved by using a fairly limited technique; all the brick courses are strictly kept to a horizontal alignment and the pattern created by variation in level of relief. Geometrical motifs therefore predominate. The long walls are ornamented at intervals with diamond shapes whose points each terminate in a small lozenge. The relief is one brick deep and the units are filled in with rows of steps outlined in chequered panels. The decoration of the four towers is less restrained although disciplined into horizontal bands. Here the outermost layer of brick

[18] Scott Waring, pp. 32–3 [19] Curzon, vol. II, p. 99. [20] *Ibid., loc. cit.*

[21] Until recently it was used as a prison and police station whose buildings are still attached on the southeast side.

[22] For comparison see Morris, Wood and Wright, *Persia*, pl. 47 citadel of Bam; pl. 50 Yazd old town walls.

has been used to form designs either in sunk or raised relief. Four main areas of motifs can be divided into two groups working from top to bottom: (a) deep bands of interlocking zigzags picked out in sunk relief; (b) a herringbone band on a bolder scale with interspaces neatly balanced with chequered diamond motifs; (c) a broadly composed band of linked faceted cartouches and lozenges alternating; (d) a broad band of reciprocal trefoils in sunk and raised relief. Bands (a) and (b) clearly have the type of motifs which can be built up in stepped oblique lines, but those of (c) and (d) are more closely related to designs in other media; the cartouche is used as a border in 17th-century carpets and the reciprocal lozenge is based on the more flowing lines of a reciprocal trefoil found as a narrow guide-line also on carpets.

Access to the citadel was gained by an entrance on the south-east side. Evidence that this entrance can be attributed to Karīm Khān is shown by two European accounts, that of Francklin[23] who published an account in 1788 only nine years after Karīm Khān's death, and that of Gore Ouseley[24] who entered the palace in 1811 through this gate. They both remark on the large tilework picture of Rustam fighting the White Dīv which adorns the entrance. A similar tile panel is still visible. Once inside the Arg the internal structure is simple. All apartments were built into the retaining walls leaving an open central court. These apartments consist of two storeys of interconnected rooms each with a large window facing the court. A crenellated effect is achieved by flat semi-engaged brick columns between each vertical pair of windows. Certain adaptations were made to the court in Qājār times. For example the tilework was restored by Prince ʿAbd al-Ḥasan Mīrzā Farmā.[25] Curzon is a witness of this alteration. He records that "its interior is occupied by the courtyards and pavilion of the governor's residence which struck me as in no sense remarkable".[26] He also saw remains of Karīm Khān's structures which no longer stand today: when he visited the Governor Muʿtamad al-Daula, he passed "through two large garden courts one of which contained a marble dado of warriors in relief and painted, a relic of the palace of Kerim Khan".[27]

In addition to his citadel it seems clear that Karīm Khān used external palace buildings. Persian concepts of domestic architecture, both of palaces on a grand scale and homes on a more moderate plan, are traditionally less compact than western ones. Relationships between buildings and the outside environment were stressed; therefore a palace could consist of a series of individual structures set within a walled enclosure. Karīm Khān's buildings are no exception. In

[23] Francklin, p. 23. [24] Ouseley, vol. II, chap. 7, p. 17. [25] Mostafavi, p. 38.
[26] Curzon, vol. II, p. 98. [27] *Ibid., loc. cit.*

addition to his citadel he built several palace structures which remain today, but in a drastically curtailed form. Thus on the north side of the maidān and east of the citadel stood a large building, the *dīvānkhāna* or audience chamber. Little of this has survived because it was ransacked by Āghā Muḥammad Qājār for building materials[28] and also adapted for use as the office of the Indo-European and Persian Telegraph Departments in the second half of the 19th century. A misleadingly isolated impression is also given because the remains are concealed behind the Post Office and separated from the citadel area by the modern Khiyābān-i Shāpūr. Originally the dīvānkhāna would have been reached by passing east from the citadel through an arched gateway which opened onto a garden.[29] At present little remains apart from the ornamental pool and the much altered reception tālār, still faced with its original marble frieze depicting scenes from romantic poems such as Niẓāmī's "Lailā and Majnūn".

The citadel and the dīvānkhāna may be considered as the official, public areas of the palace complex. Karīm Khān, again following Persian tradition, kept public and private life strictly separate. He built another palace annexe, the Kulāh-i Farangī, on the south side of the maidān. This is a small building enclosed within a garden which as late as 1850 also contained other buildings; Binning talks about an "Imareti Khorshid" and an "Imareti Kah", a tower-like structure.[30] If Binning's description is accurate it is evident that the turret structure has an 18th-century predecent as it is mainly found in the late 19th-century buildings of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh and also is seen in the battlemented enclosure of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's summer residence at Qaṣr-i Qājār. Only the Kulāh-i Farangī stands today, a small building clearly intended for occasional use as a place in which to relax and receive guests informally (pl. 47*b*). Externally it seems deceptively simple with an octagonal ground plan. It is built of finely bonded bricks on a stone foundation which also serves as a platform to which access is gained by a flight of three stone steps set against each of the four oblique sides of the octagon. At the rim of the octagon are deeply projecting wooden eaves with radial supports on the underside. The four straight sides are pierced by four arched openings; the windows here can be opened to give access to the garden and thus create an intimate relationship between the inside and outside world. Within, the plan is a saltire and on several levels focused around a central octagonal pool. The tall window-entrances on the straight side lead into a lofty hall which contrasts with the arms of the saltire which are filled with small rooms on two storeys. These rooms are, however, connected with the central hall by

[28] Curzon, vol. II, p. 99. [29] *Ibid.*, *loc. cit.* [30] Binning, vol. I, p. 279.

arches on the lower level and open interior windows on the upper level. This division of space and mingling of levels within one building is a distinctive feature of Persian closed chamber architecture; it has precedents in the domed chambers of mosques from Saljūq times onwards and in secular buildings such as the Safavid Hasht Bihisht kiosk at Iṣfahān, which is itself built on an octagonal plan. Karīm Khān's kiosk, however, is on a more intimate and modest scale. Both interior and exterior surfaces of the structure are enlivened by decoration in four media. (a) Stone: the limestone foundations are carved on one level of shallow relief with broad flat cartouches and cypress trees from whose bases duck heads whimsically spring; (b) as in Karīm Khān's citadel, brick is used decoratively by picking out geometric patterns on one level of relief. Thus the spandrels above the arches of the window entrance are filled with repeating diamond lattice patterns. The terrace which projects above the wooden eaves is ornamented with a continuous band of reciprocal trefoils in sunken raised relief as on the turrets of Karīm Khān's citadel; (c) the use of painted tile work is here introduced; panels, spandrels and continuous friezes skilfully pinpoint the structural features and provide surface variation; (d) within the kiosk surfaces are painted. Much of this was restored in 1937 and 1938, but a few sections remain to show that a fresco technique was used of painting in fresh bright mineral pigment on a plaster foundation. The designs of birds among gay flowering trees are paralleled in other contemporary media – such as lacquer painting and tilework.

Apart from these secular buildings Karīm Khān was also responsible for the planning and construction of a fine mosque, the Masjid-i Vakīl, built on the south side of the maidān slightly south-east of the Kulāh-i Farangī. It is significant not only as a major religious building of the Zands but also as the only important building of its kind to be constructed in late 18th-century Persia. A definitive assessment of this building remains difficult because on examination and by comparison with other dated architecture it is clear that several building or at least decorative stages are involved. The mosque has also seen restoration. A tentative history only of the building stages may be suggested. The mosque was begun late in Karīm Khān's reign: Ḥasan-i Fasāʾī mentions that it was built in 1180/1766.[31] It was still in a reasonable condition nearly 40 years later. Scott Waring records in 1802 that "the outside of the principal mosque is very handsome and like the generality of eastern buildings is ornamented with painted tiles and Arabic inscriptions." Curzon, however, visiting Shīrāz in 1889,

[31] Fasāʾī, book 2, p. 160.

records "the only fabrics . . . in anything approaching repair are those erected by Kerim Khan the most beautiful of which is the Musjid-i-Vekil near the Meidan, left unfinished by the Regent at his death and never yet completed".[32] He does not quote a source for this information so it is not clear whether he is recording written record or hearsay, but his comments cannot be discounted and the question must be left open. Karīm Khān's presence is disappointingly absent from the inscriptions of the mosque, but, since the mosque's decoration was restored during the 19th century, Curzon might have deduced that this restoration was the completion of Karīm Khān's unfinished work. Epigraphic and stylistic evidence indicates that the mosque was restored during the 19th century, following damage in the earthquake of June 1824. Later restorations to the tilework adorning the entrance and interiors of the north and south aivāns were carried out during 1243/1827 and 1244/1828 by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's son Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā, then governor of Fārs. Dated inscriptions left of the entrance alcove, on two panels west and east of the north aivān, running around the interior of the south aivān and bordering the aivān record this. Within the south aivān a tilework inscription on the *miḥrāb* also records, without a date, that Ḥusain ʿAlī Mīrzā restored the mosque after an earthquake.[33] Inscriptions give evidence of yet another period of restoration following the earthquake of 5 May 1853.[34] A frieze running along the upper border of the east side of the porch contains the date 1237/1856, in the reign of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh. This evidence of a later restoration is supported stylistically by the tilework surrounding the miḥrāb which is in the high "Victorian" style developed under Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh. What then is left of Karīm Khān? Is there in fact a Zand foundation underlying the exuberant Qājār superstructure? Possibly the basic plan and main structural features are Zand since several sources attested the solidity of Zand building; the buildings themselves survived the earthquake which wreaked havoc in 19th century Shīrāz and seemingly only the adornment needed repair. So it may be assumed that the plan and inspiration are Zand: there are certainly enough features to distinguish it from preceding and following architectural styles.

The plan is remarkable for its generous spatial area and the modest proportions of the architectural units; for example it is not dominated by massive *pīshṭāq*s or towering aivāns to dwarf the arcades. Access is gained to the mosques on the north through a recessed entrance (pl. 46*b*) the upper vault of which is adorned with muqarnas – a traditional and versatile decoration in which a

[32] Curzon, vol. II, p. 102. [33] Bihrūzī, p. 50.
[34] See Ambraseys and Melville, pp. 57, 62.

honeycomb or stalactite effect is built up by using small squinches set at various angles. A covered vestibule behind the entrance leads by two passages into the open court of the mosque.

The open court with four aivāns is the classic yet variable plan of the Persian mosque. Here however the plan is different. The court is rectangular, 130 × 80 metres, with two aivāns only facing each other and centred on the north and south sides; the east and west sides are lined with a single storey of covered arches. The aivāns themselves are simple rectangular shallow structures with a rectangular central recess which is drawn into a pointed arch by faceted vaulting (pl. 47*a*). The north aivān is surmounted by a pair of *guldasta* (minarets or turrets), which were probably added later. The south aivān's apparent simplicity is deceptive as it serves as an entrance to a large covered prayer hall, a *shabistān*, which extends the width of the building and is five vaulted bays deep. In contrast to the rest of the mosque structure, which is of baked brick, the shabistān is supported on forty-eight fluted marble columns which terminate in acanthus leaf capitals. The marble for these columns was brought from Yazd and Āẕarbāījān.[35] The miḥrāb is a recessed tiled niche centred in the back wall of the shabistān and has a marble *minbar* to its left. The row of five vaults leading in from the south aivān to the miḥrāb are tiled but otherwise the area is not emphasized.

This treatment of the *qibla* area of the Masjid-i Vakīl is of great interest, in that it has broken away from the tradition associated with the open court mosque plan. Here the qibla area is given much more prominence as the miḥrab is positioned in the back wall of a lofty square chamber surmounted by a dome. Within such a chamber considerable dramatic effect was achieved by the juxtaposition of squinches and vaults. A comparison with the Zand treatment must be sought in an earlier type of mosque plan, the so-called "Arab mosque plan". Here the open court is surrounded by arcades, which are deepest on the qibla side. The logical development of this was a deep columned vestibule, which is indeed the basis of the Masjid-i Vakīl's shabistān. The originality is in the combination of both columned prayer hall and aivān structures. This is neatly done, by having balancing aivāns on the north and south sides, and by fitting in the shabistān behind the south aivān. An interesting feature of the structure is the use of stone for columns. Until this period, possibly because there was little need for it, stone was used sparingly in Persian Islamic architecture and mainly decorative, as friezes lining the lower interior walls of a

[35] Fasāʾī, p. 161.

building, less frequently as column bases. The plan of the Masjid-i Vakīl is completed by a *shabistān-i zamistānī*, winter prayer hall, also a stone-columned structure, but enclosed on all sides. In addition to its use as a unit of construction, marble continued its traditional decorative function. The lower parts of the aivāns and arcade walls are faced with slabs of marble finely carved in relief with floral motifs. The major feature of decoration is, however, the tilework, which combines bands of inscriptions and lavish floral motifs.

Karīm Khān followed the Islamic tradition of mingling religious and secular buildings within one complex. Behind the Masjid-i Vakīl he built the Ḥammam-i Vakīl (Vakīl's Baths) and reached on the east by a short covered way from the mosque's entrance is the Bāzār-i Vakīl. The bazaar survives today as a thriving commercial centre though in a much changed condition due to later alterations in town planning. Several of the European travel accounts give a picture of its original state. Scott Waring in 1802 says "The Vakeel's Bazaar is a most noble work; it is built of brick, arched and covered in like Exeter Change . . . It probably extends half a mile and is, I should suppose, fifty feet wide . . . It has a grand appearance at night, when it is lit up; and as every trade has a separate quarter, you know where to resort to for what you may require . . . Many of the other markets are very handsome, but none so magnificent as the Vakeel's."[36] Binning in 1850[37] describes the bazaar as consisting of two vaulted arcades each half a mile long with a dome at each intersection. His account is confirmed and more valuable details added by Edward Stack who visited Shīrāz in 1882. He describes a cruciform plan with the following measurements – length of main branch 500 yards, cross-branch 120 yards, vaulted roof twenty-two feet high, road twelve feet broad, and adds approvingly "and the shops which open back from the masonry platforms on either side are neat and well-stocked".[38] From these accounts it is clear that the Bāzār-i Vakīl was a well-proportioned and symmetrically planned structure with vaulted streets. Today only one of the arcades survives. The other and the dome at the intersection have been replaced by the Karīm Khān Zand boulevard, which bisects the remaining section of the bazaar.

The Qājār Period, 1787–1925

Buildings of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, 1797–1834

The energetic building programme of the Zands effectively came to an end with Karīm Khān's death in 1779. Shortly afterwards the forces of civil disorder,

[36] Scott Waring, p. 32. [37] Binning, vol. 1, p. 276. [38] Stack, vol. 1, p. 50.

which had been contained rather than eliminated during his reign, resurfaced and his successors were in conflict with the Qājār Āghā Muḥammad, who finally defeated and killed Luṭf ʿAlī Khān Zand in Kirmān in 1792. Āghā Muḥammad Qājār had already consolidated his position in northern Iran. He had entered Tehran in triumph in 1786 and was formally crowned in 1796.[39] Not until the reign of his nephew, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh (1797–1834), however, did the establishment of permanent peace permit the initiation of notable architectural projects. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's reign witnessed the construction of an impressive and farflung series of both religious and secular buildings across Iran. These were distinctive for elegance and generous proportions and continued the classical tradition of Persian architecture. As they were not concentrated in a limited area it is preferable to group them by type rather than by location. They will be discussed as religious and secular buildings.

More of the former survive so it is logical to begin with them. A series of royal mosques was constructed between 1806 and 1840 in Tehran, Qazvīn, Zanjān, Simnān, Kāshān, Burūjird and Sanandaj – places widely separated and strategically situated. Tehran as the capital was an obvious choice. Qazvīn and Zanjān are on the main road from Tabrīz. Simnān is situated on the way to the northeast and the important trade and pilgrimage centre of Mashhad. This chain of royal foundations may be regarded as propaganda for the dynasty, demonstrating that Persia was firmly and peaceably under control. As several of these mosques are dated they provide unequivocal sources for the progress of architecture and its decoration during Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's reign. Four mosques furnish good examples:

(1) Masjid-i Shāh, Qazvīn. This is the earliest recorded example of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's religious foundations. It was constructed on foundations begun, according to Eastwick, who saw it in 1860, by Āghā Muḥammad Qājār. An inscription in the entrance gives Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's name and the date 1806.

(2) Masjid-i Shāh, Zanjān. According to the traveller George Keppel, the building of this mosque was under way in 1827. He noted in his diary that, "Adjoining the bazaar, and fronting the palace, a supurb mosque is erecting; the front is covered with enamelled bricks in the form of mosaic. It is complete to the front story; and the principal arch, which is formed of hewn stone, has a solid and handsome appearance."[40] Two sets of dates in the south aivān, the earlier 1827 and the later 1829, in a calligraphy border, corroborate Keppel and indicate that at least two more years' work had been required.

(3) Masjid-i Shāh, Simnān. An inscription of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh in the south aivān

[39] Fasāʾī, trans Busse, pp. 23, 67–8. [40] Keppel, vol. 1, p. 158.

is dated 1828. Inscriptions additionally give the name of craftsmen involved – Ṣafar ʿAlī Iṣfahānī Miʿmār, "the architect", and Muḥammad ʿAlī, tilemaker.

(4) Masjid-i Shāh, Tehran. Naturally Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh constructed a large mosque in his capital. He sited it at the heart of the city, immediately southeast of the Gulistān Palace, and adjacent to the bazaar. Again on the evidence of inscriptions several years' work was required. Two dates in the south aivān, 1808 and 1813, are recorded. This mosque, however, was later embellished by Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, whose name is included in an inscription over the north entrance dated 1890, and who also added minarets.

These four mosques all share a common plan, that of the classic Persian open square or rectangular court pierced with an aivān on each side. The very simplicity of this plan gives the clue to its long survival and tenacity in Persian architecture. Far from being a limiting factor it permits great flexibility. Extensions could be built beyond the confines of the court while its component units could vary in complexity and proportion. A comparison of the four royal mosques demonstrates these points and the variations in interpretation. Common to all mosques built on the open-court plan is the skill with which they are integrated into their environment. They do not as in western architecture present three-dimensional external vistas but are intimately linked to the surrounding buildings and streets by shared communal walls and connecting passages. All four are linked to the bazaar quarters, a traditional and practical combination of spiritual and material needs. At Qazvīn the mosque's entrance is reached by a long walk extending back from the main street, while the mosque itself is intimately related to the caravanserais and *tīmcha*s of Qazvīn's bazaar complex. In Tehran the Masjid-i Shāh's entrance forms one side of a maidān below street level, containing ironmongery shops, while further links with the bazaar are provided by a network of exits on the south-east side of the mosque's court. The mosques at Zanjān and Simnān continue this feature.

As the mosque was so integrated with surrounding buildings, it was essential that certain features were emphasized for purposes of easy identification. One of the most obvious choices for this was the entrance aligned along the north side. The entrance of the two mosques of Qazvīn (pl. 48*a*) and Tehran, both constructed within two years of each other, show how this was achieved. Each entrance was constructed as an arched portal which, although on less monumental lines than, for example, the entrance of the Safavid Masjid-i Shāh of Iṣfahān, was still of dominating proportions. Both these entrances show that by early Qājār times width was an important element, resulting in a more "stocky" construction. Each entrance is focused on a centrally positioned deep arch, the

upper vault filled with clusters of stalactites worked in stucco at Qazvīn and covered by polychrome tile at Tehran, and so arranged that the eye is led up to the apex. In each mosque the arch is extended into a massive rectangle by a carefully organized combination of triangular spandrels, and a series of ascending panels; all these units are set within a framework of vertical and horizontal bands. Tilework decoration serves further to advertize the mosque's presence and underline the units of construction. Another notable feature is the absence of minarets flanking the entrance – they are not a characteristic of early Qājār buildings; those at Tehran are Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's addition.

In all cases the entrances link up with the north aivān of the mosque's open court. This was achieved in Qazvīn, Tehran and Simnān by constructing a vaulted octagonal vestibule behind the entrance, from which two passages opened out to left and right into the court to flank the vaulted arch of the north aivān. Additionally in the later mosque at Simnān the back of the aivān is linked to the vestibule by a tall archway. Structurally and proportionally the form of the aivāns progresses chronologically; the north aivāns of the two earliest mosques are massive and broad with a wide but comparatively low vaulted niche, within a frame of a series of three ascending panels. Over 20 years later at Simnān the aivān proportions were altered to produce a taller, more elegant structure, in which verticals are emphasized and another panel is added to the series flanking the vaulted arch.

In all four mosques the north aivān gives access to an open court of extensive area, where four sides are lined with continuous arcades of arches. Here again variations in construction and proportion are discernable. The three mosques of Tehran, Qazvīn and Zanjān, all have a single storey of arcades, formed of broad shallow arches. A more interesting treatment is seen at Simnān where the arches are taller and more slender, to harmonize with the proportions of the aivāns, and are organized into a two-storeyed arcade, the upper set well back from the lower to form an open terraced walk. Within an open-court plan certain variations were permissible in the number of aivāns centred on each side. The Masjid-i Vakīl at Shīrāz had two, and this scheme is repeated in some later 19th-century mosques. The four mosques under discussion here, however, all conformed to the plan involving four aivāns, one centred on each side. All are constructed on the same basic principle of a deep vaulted recess with a stalactite muqarnas set within a rectangular frame of varying proportions, but are treated as pairs of west and east aivāns and north and south aivāns (pl. 48*b*, *c*). The west–east pair are lower than the north–south pair and more stolid in construction. This feature is constant in all four mosques.

In contrast the aivāns on the north–south axis are taller and more imposing and at Qazvīn and Simnān further stressed by being flanked with a double storey of the courtyard arches. Although structurally and decoratively comparable, the south aivān is the most significant and consequently the most lavishly ornamented, to serve as a monumental entrance to the *maqṣūra*, the domed sanctuary which houses the mosque's principal miḥrāb in its southern wall. The construction and plan of the maqṣūra is seen most clearly at Qazvīn and Simnān (pl. 49*a*), where there is little difference apart from subtleties of proportion. In each case the maqṣūra is a square chamber set with a squinch at each corner surmounted by a zone of triangular pendentives – a well-established tradition effecting the transition to a dome. At Qazvīn the squinches are simple arches set at an angle, whereas at Simnān they are elaborated by the inclusion of a double secondary arch. In all the mosques, the dome rises as a prominent turquoise glazed hemisphere, but at Simnān it is fashioned out of plain brick with a deep external octagonal drum, and a tall narrow tiled "kiosk" at the apex.

The four mosques discussed represent the basic features of large-scale religious buildings of the early Qājār period. It would be mistaken, however, to assume that they provided an immutable pattern for all such architecture. Less regular treatment is found in mosques built by private patrons, as for example the Masjid-i Sardār built at Qazvīn in 1815–16 by two brothers, Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān Sardār and Ḥusain Khān Sardār, who both served as generals in Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's army. The mosque is built on the open plan with a court of more modest proportions and lined with continuous arches. There are no aivāns and the sanctuary is simply indicated by a broader arch centered on the south façade (pl. 49*b*) and opening into a sanctuary surmounted by a small kiosk.[41] A more ingenious, and graceful plan is seen in the Masjid-i Āghā Buzurg, built in 1832 at Kāshān. There a secondary court, constructed around a sunken garden (pl. 50*a*), enables the functions of mosque and madrasa to be combined, while the maqṣūra is constructed as a chamber open on all sides.

A greater number of secular buildings exist for the Qājār period than for earlier centuries, to make a more balanced assessment of its architectural achievement possible. Although for Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's reign many of these buildings, especially in Tehran, have been destroyed or drastically altered during recent modernization schemes, it is possible by combining information gleaned from structures which have survived wholly or in part, and from contemporary sources to establish a sequence and scheme of constructions. Such

[41] Piemontese, fig. 24, photograph of the Masjid-i Sardār taken in 1862.

buildings were all royal foundations, the town and country palaces of the Qājār court. The idea of migration was deep-rooted in Persian tradition, and, as practised by the Qājār rulers and their retinue, involved moving out of Tehran for the hot summer months to cooler retreats. By modern standards the distances were small. Most of these summer quarters were located in the Shamīrānāt villages near Tehran which are now its northern suburbs. The focus of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's system of palaces was the Gulistān Palace or Arg – which served both as the ruler's town residence and as the centre of government. It is situated in south Tehran, close to the Masjid-i Shāh and the bazaar, then the heart of the city. It was planned in a seemingly rambling and confused manner much remarked on by European travellers who were used to a much more formal style of official building. It consisted essentially of a series of pavilions and porches, set within an enclosed garden, containing trees, flower beds, and ornamental pools. The essential point is the close relationship between building and garden, especially noticeable in the use of open porches and kiosks. This relationship is seen in the palaces of Iṣfahān, and Karīm Khān Zand's quarters at Shīrāz. Although the Gulistān Palace was the nucleus of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's residential buildings, comparatively little remains of his work, as it was altered by Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh.[42] According to tradition, not Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh but Karīm began the Gulistān Palace. Karīm Khān initially intended to make Tehran his capital and in 1759–60 had the walls of the town and Arg rebuilt with administrative buildings, audience chamber, and private quarters inside the Arg. When Karīm Khān Zand returned to Shīrāz, he left the Gulistān buildings to be embellished and extended by the Qājārs. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's major building operations were apparently completed by 1806. Amédée de Jaubert, Napoleon's envoy, describes a glittering reception held there at which he beheld the resplendent king seated in his glittering Dīvānkhāna,[43] a monumental porch, the main structure of his reign surviving today. The clearest general picture of his work, however, is supplied by Pascal Coste and Eugene Flandin, two French architects who accompanied an official mission in 1839–41.[44] They relate that the palace was situated in the then north-west of town and surrounded by a turretted wall of baked brick and a ditch. This citadel appearance has long since disappeared. The palace gardens and buildings were reached through the principal gate on the west, the Dar-i Saʿādat (Gate of Happiness), a two-storeyed structure with its own tālār and flanking side chambers, which in turn was pierced by a gate with a drawbridge. Within the enclosure the following

[42] See Ẕukā for a comprehensive account of the Gulistān Palace and its history.
[43] Jaubert, pp. 202–9. [44] Coste, *Monuments modernes*, p. 42.

buildings were listed, which reflect the dual functions of administrative centre and royal residence: *Dīvānkhāna*, reception tālār; *Ṣundūq khāna*, treasury; *ʿImārat-i Khūrshīd*, the pavilion where Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh received foreign ambassadors; the private apartments, *Khwābgāh-i Shāh*, king's sleeping quarters and *andarūn*, separated by gardens; and finally, the guardrooms and arsenal.

Unfortunately Coste and Flandin gave no plan for this complex. Hence it is impossible to reconstruct exact spatial relationships, but from their surviving drawings the Dīvānkhāna[45] and its court appear bounded by a wall; it would seem that originally the palace was much more divided into separate units screened by trees than it is in its present state. Of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's buildings only the Dīvānkhāna survives and that, as far as its decoration is concerned, in an altered form. Flandin drew the Dīvānkhāna as an imposing broad tālār flanked by a pair of wings of mezzanine-floored rooms opening both on to the garden and into the tālār. The tālār, an architectural unit of great antiquity, is basically a deep porch – consisting of a square or rectangular room open on the fourth side and supported by columns; it is a versatile unit – capable of being used with splendid proportions as in palaces, or more modestly in private houses, where it can be sealed off against the outside world by sliding sash windows. In the Gulistān Palace it is of deep proportions and open to the garden. It is supported on two twisted marble columns with muqarnas capitals reputedly cannabalized from Karīm Khān Zand's comparable Dīvānkhāna at Shīrāz (pl. 50*b*). Within, the structure is simple, consisting of two storeys of rooms running round the tālār and interrupted by an aivān niche at the centre back. All the façades are richly decorated with mirrorwork mosaic framing oil paintings of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh. The wings flanking the tālār are each of two storeys linked by connecting stairs on each side of the central rooms. Upper and lower landings have connecting doors to the tālār while the main rooms are divided from each other by wooden lattice sliding windows extending from ceiling to floor. The ingenuity with which different floor levels were manipulated and interlinked in a harmonious manner is one of the most significant features of Persian domestic architecture worthily continued by the Qājārs. The Dīvānkhāna's dominating proportions are stressed by the lower level of the single storey of arches which appear running along each side and angled to form the retaining walls of a courtyard. Although this elegant structure survives it was altered by Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh. He filled in the façades of the tālār wings with polychrome tilework, creating a much heavier effect, and demolished the single-storey arcades,

[45] Coste, *op. cit.*, pl. LXII.

replacing them on the northeast side by a two-storeyed building and opening the east side out into a more spacious open court area. The two ornamental pools directly in front of the tālār – one an ogee-shaped quatrefoil the other long and rectangular – have been preserved.

Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's summer residences[46] fall into a clear pattern, those comparatively near the city of Tehran, which were constructed as fully developed permanent habitations, and those situated at varying distances from the capital, which could either be modest small-scale buildings, dominated by their gardens, pirated Safavid buildings, or even temporary encampments. Most of them have been much altered or completely demolished. Of those within the city's environs, the Nigāristān was one of the most favoured by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh. During his reign it was about a mile north of Tehran, which indicates how compact the city then was. Although today its one remaining structure, with its vaulted ceiling carved with white stucco on a blue background, serves as a museum and is surrounded by office buildings, enough accounts of the 19th-century travellers have survived to give a general picture of its architecture and plan. It seems to have been completed at the latest by 1812. Tancoigne,[47] visiting Tehran in 1807, describes it as a rectangular enclosure surrounded by wide brick walls, while Price in his journal entry for 1811[48] refers to the pavilion decorated with paintings of the foreign ambassadors received by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, including Sir John Malcolm and Sir Harford Jones (pls. 16, 17). Later visitors both substantiate and enlarge on this. All agree that the palace was planned as a number of open octagonal pavilions within an enclosure. Thus it was basically informal, giving as much importance to the garden as to the buildings. George Keppel in his account of 1824[49] mentions three pavilions, of which one was decorated with an elaborate series of murals of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh receiving ambassadors. Johnson, in his earlier account of 1817, is more specific about the paintings, giving exact positions for them in the main audience pavilion and placing the envoys to whom Price referred in a side room. He also adds, "These paintings are all of very recent date and certainly do the artist great credit".[50] Charles Stuart in 1835 provides more information, identifying the first pavilion as a bath-house.[51] Jane Dieulafoy, however, as late as 1889, gives the most specific information as far as function and form are concerned. She states that the main building, the audience pavilion containing the narrative paintings, is in the shape of a Greek cross, the centre of which is domed while each of the four arms contains a vestibule and

[46] Scarce, "The royal palaces". [47] Tancoigne, Letter XX, pp. 179–80.
[48] Price, p. 29. [49] Keppel, vol. II, pp. 129–30. [50] Johnson, pp. 158–9.
[51] Stuart, p. 209.

two smaller rooms which could be used as sleeping quarters. She saw that the andarūn gardens were grouped around this main pavilion sealed off by walls and containing a rectangular building – two-storeyed, facing on to a pool.[52] It is interesting that she was able to notice so much, as even at the time of Keppel's visit in 1824 he found the subsidiary buildings dirty and neglected. Binning in 1850 remarked that: "The apartments are all dirty and dingy; the present Shah rarely comes hither and the place is consequently neglected."[53]

Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's most spectacular building efforts were reserved for another summer palace, Qaṣr-i Qājār, situated approximately four miles northeast of Tehran on the Shamīrān road leading to Gulhak. After many years of decay, it became a prison in the 1930s. Today no trace remains of it. Once again, therefore, it is necessary to rely on the accounts and drawings of contemporary travellers for a reconstruction.

It was certainly built by 1807, as Tancoigne remembers it as a large brick-built complex consisting of a series of courts and terraces crowned by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's palace.[54] The most coherent account, however, especially valuable because of the drawing and plans which accompany it, is that of the two French architects Coste and Flandin.[55] Their description is brief, because all the necessary information can be deduced from comprehensive plans and drawings (fig. 5). These supply a ground plan, elevation, perspective view from the entrance, and a detailed drawing of a kulāh-i farangī – "foreigner's hat" – the term for an open octagonal pavilion under a shallow dome and with overhanging eaves, as in Karīm Khān's example in Shīrāz. The entire complex was enclosed within a brick wall with turrets at each corner comparable to the tradition of Karīm Khān Zand's citadel though on a much larger scale.

Two outstanding features are noticeable. First the scale of garden and open space in relation to the buildings; the entire palace is prefaced by an enormous rectangular garden, with an entrance gatehouse at the south end. This garden is gradually terraced, leading up to a rectangular pool which heralds the entrance to the main palace area. Apart from the entrance to the Kulāh-i Farangī centred in the garden, there are no buildings. Considerable care has, however, been exercised to divide up the garden area into an orderly pattern of tree plots by intersecting paths and water channels. It thus incorporates all the features of a classic Persian garden – trees, water, and seclusion from the outside world – the small open-sided pavilion serving to indicate the intermingling of man-made and natural environments.

[52] Dieulafoy, p. 129. [53] Binning, vol. II, pp. 220–1. [54] Tancoigne, pp. 180–3.
[55] Coste *op. cit.*, p. 42, pls. LVIII–LXI.

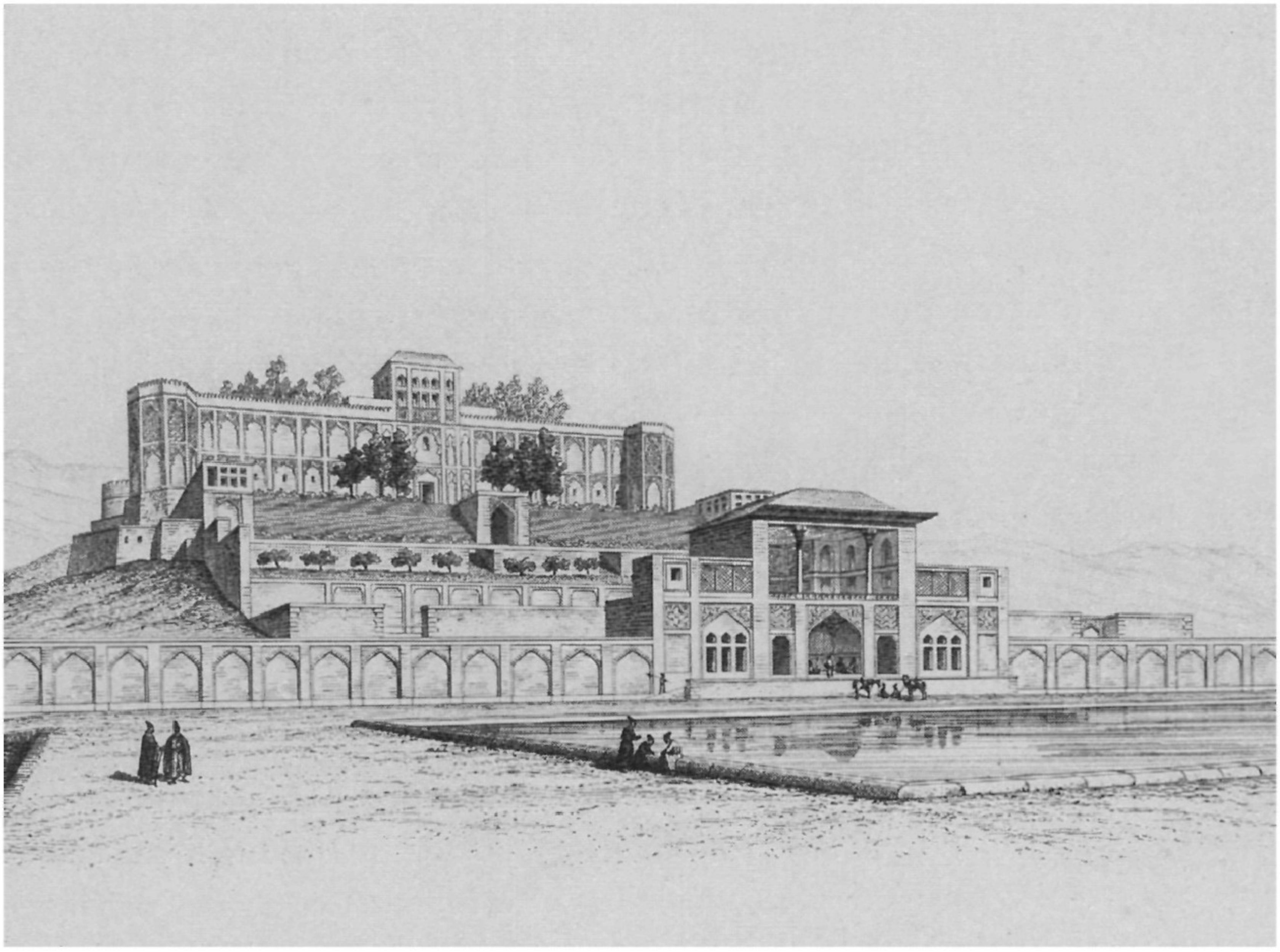


Fig. 5 Environs of Tehran. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's summer palace of Qaṣr-i Qājār, perspective view.

The second most noticeable feature is that the plan basically consists of a series of elevated and terraced open rectangles, which give an interesting and varied panorama, culminating in the citadel of multi-storeyed royal quarters. The convention of concealing residential areas behind a vast garden was strongly rooted in Persian secular architecture; it is seen earlier in the 17th century Chihil Sutūn palace at Iṣfahān, and later in the Bāgh-i Iram at Shīrāz, c. 1875. At Qaṣr-i Qājār there is an interesting variant on the open tālār structure already seen in the Gulistān Palace. Units of Persian architecture are versatile in function and here the tālār is elevated into a two-columned vestibule over an imposing gatehouse; this in turn is made up of an aivān with muqarnas decoration flanked by multi-storeyed extensions much as in the Gulistān Palace. The gatehouse in its turn opens into a narrow court lined on both sides with rooms – which again gives access to another series of landscaped terraces – framed within brick walls of continuous blind niches. These serve as a preface to the living quarters, constructed as a square citadel-like enclosure with a facetted turret at each corner. The plan indicates that the citadel enclosed an open garden, with its sides lined with series of rooms which served as quarters for ministers,

officers, and courtiers. It can be assumed that Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's quarters were on the south side and that his harem inhabited the two-storeyed kiosk wing above the entrance. This is possible as stairs leading to the women's quarters are indicated on the plan here and this kiosk would have been the only area that could have been kept segregated. Coste and Flandin did, however, visit Qaṣr-i Qājār long after Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's death, when it was no longer in active use, so that the original functions of the various rooms might no longer have been clear.

In addition to these palaces within the more immediate environs of Tehran, Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh constructed summer residences further afield. Some of these were for easy access along the main routes, such as the Sulaimānīya palace at Karaj and that at Sulṭānīya, on the main Tehran–Tabrīz road. Both have either been totally destroyed or survive in a much reduced form, Sulaimānīya as a dilapidated building in the grounds of the National School of Agriculture at Karaj. From its appearance today and the evidence of 19th-century accounts it was clearly never intended to be a grandiose habitation on the scale of Qaṣr-i Qājār, but rather to serve as a hunting lodge and for temporary occupation. Accounts differ concerning the date of its foundation. According to Coste and Flandin it was built in 1805 for Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's son Sulaimān Mīrzā,[56] while Eastwick states that it was built in 1808.[57] All the accounts, however, generally agree on the layout and construction. They describe a series of courts and separate buildings reserved for different functions, of which the most striking seems to have been an audience hall decorated with mural paintings of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh and his sons. More comparable in concept to Qaṣr-i Qājār was the now vanished palace built at Sulṭānīya between 1806–9.[58] Basically this was a mud and brick structure mainly built of materials cannibalized from the neighbouring Mongol monuments and consisting of four areas enclosed within walls and comprising the women's quarters, a kulāh-i farangī, private apartments, and audience hall, constructed on a multi-levelled terrace and linked by formal gardens and courts. The overall effect, however, seemed more awkward and less harmonious than that of the elegant Qaṣr-i Qājār, probably because it was essentially regarded as a rather makeshift structure for temporary habitation only. Apart from initiating new building projects Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh economically refurbished Safavid residences which conveniently served him as both provincial and summer palaces. Two such examples may be briefly mentioned: the Hasht Bihisht, a graceful octagonal pavilion built by Shāh Sulaimān in 1670 at Iṣfahān, and the structures and gardens of the Bāgh-i Fīn (fig. 6), built by Shāh ʿAbbās I just outside

[56] Coste, *Notes et souvenirs de voyages* I, p. 168. [57] Eastwick, vol. I, pp. 294–6.
[58] Hambly, "A note on Sultaniyeh/Sultanabad".

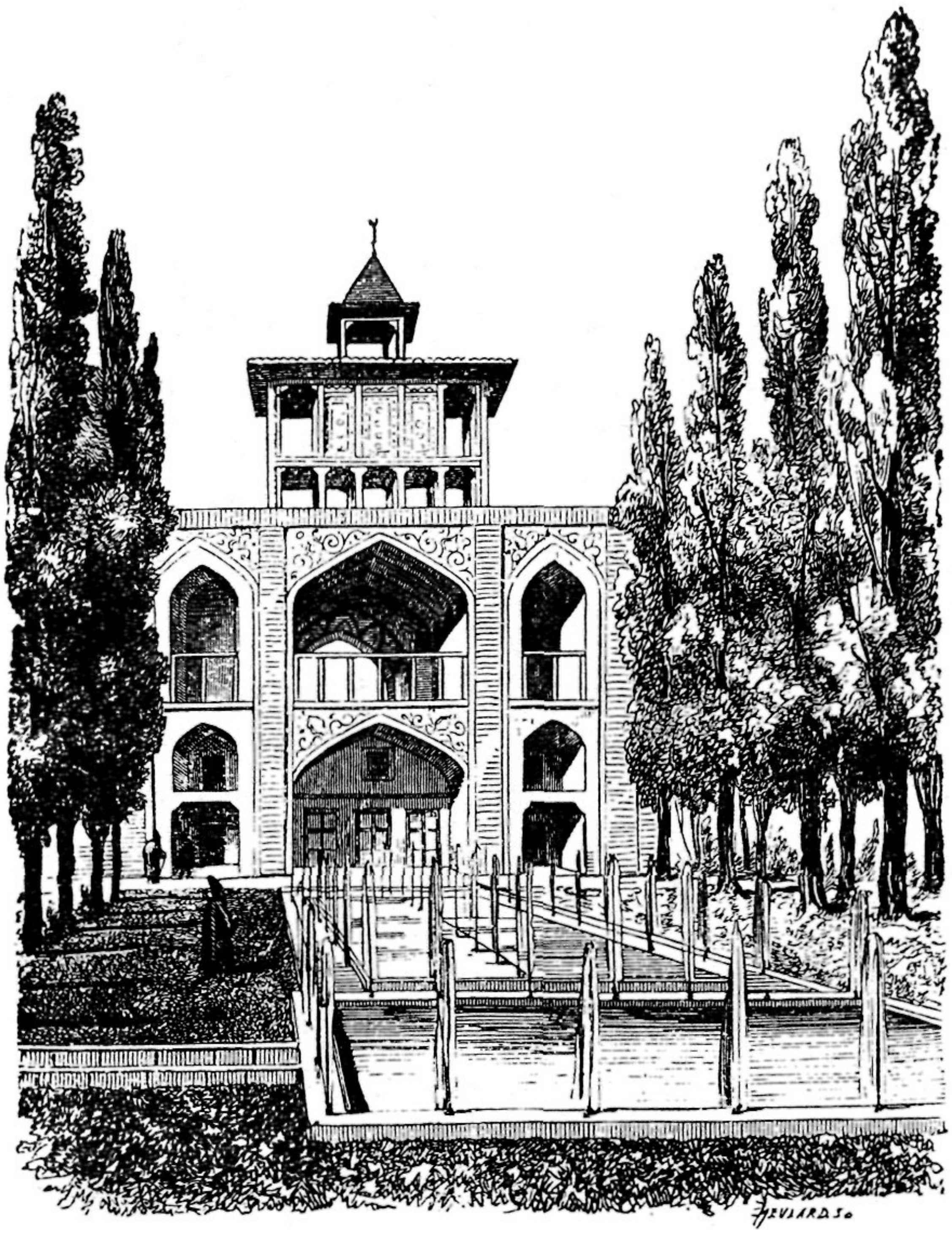


Fig. 6 Kāshān. Summer palace of Bāgh-i Fīn.

Kāshān. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh substantially renovated them, principally by having a series of mural paintings of himself and his court imposed over the original structures; and at the Bāgh-i Fīn by also constructing additional buildings including a bath-house.

Buildings of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh (1848–96)

While Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's buildings may be regarded as a graceful combination of classical forms with baroque decoration, those of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's reign bear reasonable comparison with the extravagant flowering of 19th-century European architecture whose influences are indeed discernable, grafted onto Persian tradition. Generally the scale and proportion of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's buildings are more grandiose which, when fused with exuberant and colourful decoration, create an imposing impression. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh himself during his three visits to Europe of 1873, 1878 and 1889 obviously took note of the palaces of his royal

hosts for future reference. Buildings of his reign have survived in greater number and variation than from those of his predecessors. Additionally, while naturally concentrated in Tehran, they are also well distributed throughout Persia.

Characteristic features of later Qājār religious architecture may be illustrated by taking two examples, the Masjid-i Sipahsālār built at Tehran between 1880 and 1890 by Mīrzā Ḥasan Khān, Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's Minister of War, and the Masjid-i Naṣr al-Mulk built at Shīrāz between 1876 and 1888 by Ḥasan ʿAlī Khān Daryābegī Naṣr al-Mulk, the son of ʿAlī Akbar Qavām al-Mulk.

The Masjid-i Siphahsālār is a most impressive structure, basically constructed as a large-scale version of the classic plan of an open court with four aivāns. The differences lie in the proportions involved, the manipulation of structures such as entrances and minarets, and the flamboyant detail which is emphasized by the accompanying decoration in polychrome tile and carved stone. The style of the entrance has significantly changed from those of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's buildings which were still rooted in the Persian classical tradition (pl. 51*a*). The Masjid-i Sipahsālār entrance is no longer aligned on the north side so that it symmetrically confronts the maqṣūra at its inner opening. Instead it is on the west, leading into the court through the west aivān but very much at an angle. Unlike the entrances of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's mosques it does not present itself as a high rectangular structure enshrining a stalactite vaulted portal. Instead it is set back from the main axis of the west side, has a comparatively shallow and extended stalactite vault and is completely dwarfed by the two flanking minarets which rise from elaborate bases, pass through ornately tiled columns and terminate in facetted kiosks. Internally the entrance leads into a domed vestibule from which a complex arrangement of passages enwrap the western aivān before opening on to the courtyard. This presents a more controlled appearance, a large square area enclosed by two storeys of continuous arcades which each open into a room behind, for the mosque also serves as a madrasa and rooms for the students were needed. Each of the four aivāns is classic in basic conception, with its central vault flanked by a series of panels on each side. The south aivān (pl. 51*b*) leading into the domed sanctuary presents the most elaborate appearance; the aivān itself is exaggeratedly deep and high, framed in subsidiary chambers – before expanding into the main sanctuary, the dome of which rests on four corner squinches. The façade of the aivān is adorned by four minarets of the same style and construction as those flanking the entrance; they are positioned at intervals and arise from elaborate bases as semi-engaged columns before projecting beyond the upper reaches of the court. This use of semi-engaged

columns has parallels in contemporary secular architecture, such as houses and gates, and indicates how function became subordinate to decorative effect. The spaciousness of the mosque's court is mirrored on its east side, through which access is gained by a door at the back of the eastern aivān and also by a corridor running along the north side, to a vast shabistān, a columned winter prayer hall which has been recently renovated with marble paving.

The Masjid-i Naṣr al-Mulk in Shīrāz[59] illustrates both continuity with the architectural forms of the Zand period and originality in the displacement of units comparable with those of the Masjid-i Sipahsālār, although on a smaller scale. Zand features survive in the rectangular courtyard of good proportions, the use of two aivāns only on north and south, and the addition of an enclosed shabistān on the west, supported on twelve fluted stone columns with acanthus leaf capitals. A marked eccentricity occurs however in the positioning of the entrance and the treatment of the two aivāns. The entrance, as in Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's mosques, has reverted to the north side opposite the qibla. Externally it presents a massive rectangular portal with ascending recessed panels framing a painted stalactite-lined niche. It is, however, asymmetrically situated to the extreme west of the northern side nearer the shabistān than to the main court, which is reached through a domed vestibule which turns at a sharp eastern angle to open into the northwest corner. Within the court the east and west sides present an uninterrupted flow of a single storey of arches. The treatment of the north and south sides is, however, unusual in that the most complex and elaborate treatment is devoted to the north side. Here construction is focused on a central aivān flanked by two storeys of arched niches which reach the same height as the apex of the aivān's arch. Within, the aivān extends back deeply, even beyond the outer limit of the entrance and focuses on a miḥrāb-like niche; it is in turn flanked by a subsidiary vestibule. The oblique outer west–east axis of the north side has also enabled a series of additional rooms to be included beside the northern aivān without interrupting the rectangular plan of the main court, a good example of the flexibility of this type of plan. The south side in contrast is modest (pl. 53), consisting of a one-storeyed series of six continuous niches, three niches on each side flanking a central indented niche which contains the miḥrāb and provides no access to a domed sanctuary.

The religious buildings of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's reign were not solely confined to mosques and the structurally related madrasas. He was a conscientious patron of the *imāmzāda*s or shrines. Persia is especially fertile ground for shrines. They

[59] *La Mosque Nasirolmolk*. Ministère de la culture et des arts (Shiraz n.d.).

occur in great numbers and range from modest country structures to the large complexes of such cities as Mashhad and Qum. Of early foundation they generally present a concentrated medley of architectural styles which have accrued through pious donations. The Qājārs were no exception to this tradition and their work may be seen in all of Persia's major shrines. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh added sumptuous courts and chambers to the shrines of Imām Riżā at Mashhad and Fāṭima Maʿṣūma at Qum, while Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh embellished Shāh ʿAbd al-ʿAẓīm at Rayy and added courts to the Niʿmat-Allāh Valī complex at Māhān. Perhaps the most compact example of his work is seen in the shrine of Shāhzāda Ḥusain at Qazvīn. Shāhzāda Ḥusain was the son of the eighth Imam, Riżā, and died in the 9th century. His grave was embellished by a Safavid foundation built in 1588, but so thoroughly did Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh restore it that the resulting structure gives the impression that the complex was founded during his reign. Its architectural interest lies in its skilful use of space and in the employment of units which have been observed in the mosques of his reign (pl. 52*a*). Tiled inscriptions over the portal of the saint's tomb record Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's name and the date 1889 at least indicates when work was nearing completion. Surrounding the tomb is a large open court of polygonal shape and lined with a single storey of uninterrupted arcades of niches deep enough for pilgrims to settle for the day with their bedding and cooking utensils, for the use of the courtyard is practical and informal. Access to this court is gained through a conspicuous entrance on the north side. This takes the form of an extended façade with a central broken-arch shaped pediment flanked by lower semicircular shaped pediments. The significant features however are the six slender semi-engaged columns spaced evenly – three on each side of the doorway – which contract to a small cylindrical kiosk-like terminal. These are directly comparable with the proliferation of minarets seen in the entrance and south aivān façade of the Masjid-i Sipahsālār. The form of an extended façade with semi-engaged columns will yet again be found in the construction of city gates. Centred within the court is the saint's tomb housed in an imposing polygon covered with a dome and faced with an extended façade, which combines the pediments of the entrance gate and an engaged column at each end with an inset rectangular columned aivān which in turn leads into the tomb chamber, thus employing yet another traditional unit of Persian architecture.

The secular buildings of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's reign far outnumber those of his predecessors both in quantity and in type, as they include not only palaces but a reasonable number of private homes and city gates. The major developments, however, took place in Tehran and its environs so it is appropriate to concen-

trate on them. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh continued to use the Gulistān Palace as his winter residence and centre of government, but involved it so much in his ambitious programme of renovating Tehran that his work dominates it. He started altering the Gulistān Palace in 1867 and continued until 1892, often revising his own constructions. His work may be grouped into three phases:

(a) *1867–73* During these years he built the two-towered Shams al-ʿImārat (Sun building) on the east side which was completed in 1867, followed shortly after by the andarūn quarters behind the Takht-i Marmar (Marble Throne).
(b) *1873–82* Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh pulled down all the buildings constructed by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh on the north side, replacing them with a continuous building containing the main audience hall.
(c) *1882–92* The andarūn was renovated in 1882 and the Kākh-i Abyaż (White Palace, now the Ethnographical Museum) situated to the right within the present entrance to the palace was built in 1891–92.

All these buildings were enclosed within a retaining wall and perhaps presented a rather rambling unconnected array. Many illustrations have survived of the various parts of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's palace so that it is possible to reconstruct its appearance, but perhaps the clearest picture is gained by examining the ground plan drawn up by Dr Johannes Feuvrier, Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's physician from 1889 to 1892 (fig. 7).[60] A comparison of this with the buildings standing at present reveals that approximately only one quarter of the original structures have survived: on the north the Takht-i Marmar and the audience hall; the andarūn was demolished in the early 1960s to make room for the buildings of the Ministries of Finance and Justice. The east side has survived unaltered as both the retaining wall and the Shams al-ʿImārat still stand. To the south only the ʿImārat-i Bādgīr stands, within the original tiled walls, while the subsidiary buildings behind have been replaced by the Ministry of Information. The west side of the Takht-i Marmar was formerly occupied by a series of guardhouses and stables which have now disappeared while the private street, Nāʾib al-Salṭana, formerly within the palace enclosure, is now the site of a public street, Avenue Dāvar.

Although so much has been destroyed, enough remains to give a significant assessment of the main features of grand scale civic architecture, and it is clear that there are departures from the tradition followed by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh. First of all the general impression is of greater spaciousness – all the buildings tend to be

[60] Feuvrier, *Trois ans à la cour de Perse*, p. 161.

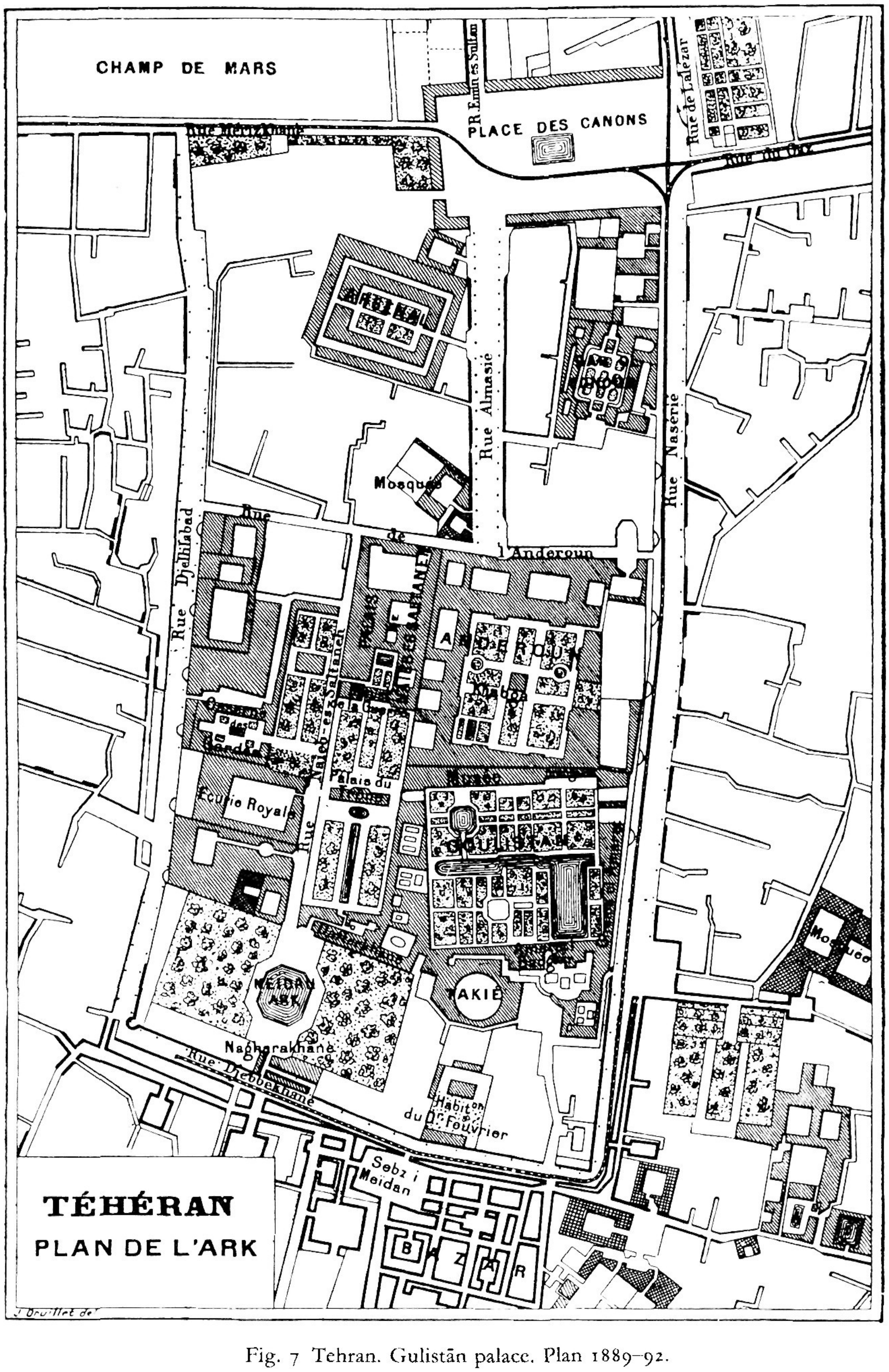


Fig. 7 Tehran. Gulistān palace. Plan 1889–92.

grouped on the perimeter of garden areas rather than kept separate within a series of courtyards. This is certainly the impression which is strongest today when visiting the palace – the emphasis laid on the garden made up of pools, plots of grass neatly bordered by flowers and the cypress and plane trees which are spread throughout.

On examination of the buildings, while some traditional features have been retained, others have been abandoned for new fashions. The double-turreted Shams al-ʿImārat, the earliest of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's buildings in the palace (pl. 52*b*), is reached by flights of steps and is multistoreyed, terminating in balconied galleries at the summit. Construction on several storeys was not unknown to the early Qājārs or beyond the capabilities of their architects as the multistoreyed central edifice of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's summer palace at Qaṣr-i Qājār showed. Other buildings, however, in particular the audience hall, indicate that such traditional units as the open columned tālār flanked by smaller interlinking chambers on several levels, which gave such a visually interesting appearance to the façades of early Qājār buildings, were no longer in favour. Instead the audience hall presents a continuous uniform two-storeyed façade (pl. 54*a*), well proportioned, in which tall windows and doors with semicircular pediments alternate with projecting engaged columns, thus articulating the surface. The entrance is massive in the form of a projecting columned portico. Seemingly the stimulus for such a building style should be sought outside the main Persian tradition since there are no indigenous parallels. The answer should surely be seen in the context of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's increasing experience of European architecture. During the ten-year period when the audience hall was built, 1873–82, he made two visits to Europe where he would have seen many royal buildings in the fluid neo-classical style of the mid to late 19th century which he sought to emulate in the Gulistān Palace. He was expressing in monumental form a taste for European fashions and novelties which was to pervade all forms of Persian material culture, ceramics, glass, motifs on tilework, and articles of dress.

Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh did not confine his building operations to the immediate area of the capital. Like his ancestors, he followed the custom of migrating to summer quarters built in the environs of Tehran. It seemed the custom for each Qājār ruler to establish his own summer residence; certainly the European travellers who visited some of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's residences long after his death remarked on the decay and neglect they observed. There was obviously neither the attempt nor the desire to continue using them, possibly because they were regarded as impermanent structures not intended for any long occupation and therefore less substantially built. Also changes of fashion in building and style of

living must be considered as much in Persia as in Western Europe, and it is probable that Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's palaces would have seemed cramped and out-of-date to Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, especially after his foreign travels had broadened his experience and taste. It is significant in this context that he found it necessary drastically to renovate and extend the Gulistān Palace. It is only logical that he should have felt the same about his summer residences. Like Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh he constructed several, although it is important to note that they were situated within a closer radius of Tehran. No longer were hunting lodges constructed as far away as Sulṭānīya, so that the tradition of a tribal leader migrating to far-flung summer pastures gradually evolved into more of a polite fiction, and the court moved to less distant places built as permanent dwellings where life continued on the same pattern as in the town, but in more comfortable climatic conditions. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's summer palaces, however, have received no more fortunate treatment than those of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh. Of the five principal palaces in the Shamīrānāt – Ṣāḥib Qarānīya (Niāvarān), Bāgh-i Firdaus, Shahristānak, Salṭanatābād and ʿIshratābād – only Niāvarān and Bāgh-i Firdaus present a relatively unaltered appearance; Niāvarān was one of the residences of the Pahlavī family and as such remained in continuous occupation, while the Bāgh-i Firdaus was repaired and used as an exhibition and concert centre. Shahristānak has since vanished, while ʿIshratābād and Salṭanatābād survived in much diminished form and recently functioned as military complexes. As they both seem to have been the ones most familiar to European visitors, to judge from the number of accounts which have survived, and they represent such a departure from the comparatively symmetrical terraces and pavilions of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, it is worth attempting to reconstruct their appearance. ʿIshratābād is now well within the city's boundaries and not far from the Gulistān Palace. It was in existence by 1882. The French traveller Ernest Orsolle[61] describes it in his travels, and Curzon saw it in 1889.[62] The account, however, which conveys most succinctly and zestfully the bizarre character of this palace is that of the French traveller, D'Allemagne:

> La plus concise de ces menageries feminines, si j'ose m'exprimer ainsi, est celle d'Echretabad où autour d'un grand lac, s'élèvent une certaine quantité de petites maisons d'une metre cinquante environ les unes des autres: on dirait les cellules de quelque monastère ouvrant sur une cloître. Dominant toutes ces menues batisses s'élève une énorme tour à trois étages decorées de tuiles céramiques multicolorés; c'est le Khabgah ou palais du sommeil dans lequel le Shah repose lorsqu'il séjourne dans la contrée et reçoit la femme qu'il daigne élever un moment jusqu'à lui . . .[63]

[61] Orsolle, p. 286. [62] Curzon, vol. I, p. 342. [63] D'Allemagne, vol. III, pp. 230–1.

Clearly the original feature here is the dispersal of the andarūn block into separate units, originally 12 little chalets, each of one storey in height with pointed roof and three windows at the gable end, surrounding the lake. In a sense the whole palace is clearly a purely private retreat, an extensive andarūn with no segregation of the chalets from the Khwābgāh – and no apparent provision of any public or reception area. Today only six chalets remain mingled with the buildings of a military barracks. The multistoreyed Khwābgāh (pl. 54*c*) stands in a much dilapidated state. The ground storey presents a panelled façade on all four sides interrupted by centred doors, while the two upper storeys present blind niches alternating with more deeply set niches with balconies which lead into rooms behind. Surmounting the third storey is what may best be described as a continuous tālār which takes the form of a roof with deeply undercut eaves supported on columns at the outer limit. Here the Khwābgāh represents an amalgam of architectural elements. In the orderly arrangement of its multistoreyed nature it is comparable to the tower of the Shams al-ᶜImārat of the Gulistān Palace, erected almost 20 years earlier in 1867. The tālār crowning the structure, however, has earlier precedents, most notably in the ᶜAlī Qāpū palace at Iṣfahān, where a frontally orientated tālār is precariously balanced; but by the late 19th century the proportions have become rather more keenly adjusted and the tālār does not appear top-heavy. The main summer residence was, however, situated at Salṭanatābād. There more formal provision was made for the varied public and private functions requisite in a royal residence. The remaining buildings are situated deep within a munitions factory complex in the north of Tehran. According to Orsolle, Salṭanatābād was situated a little above Qaṣr-i Qājār.[64] It was visited and described in varying degrees of detail by several European travellers and residents, notably Orsolle in 1882, Curzon in 1889 and Dr Feuvrier, who says that it was the principal summer residence. The earliest description, that of Orsolle, lists all the buildings, indicating that the palace was built by 1882.

In its basic plan Salṭanatābād followed the early Qājār custom of individual buildings grouped within a large park, although the plan and construction of each building was different from those employed in earlier complexes such as Qaṣr-i Qājār; the little octagonal pavilion, the kulāh-i farangī was, for example, no longer in fashion. According to Orsolle the buildings were arranged along the axis of a large avenue which traversed the park enclosure (pl. 54*b*). He lists four altogether, beginning with a gatehouse at the entrance to the avenue. This

[64] Orsolle, pp. 283–6.

structure served as a reception area for ambassadors, court officials and others. Beyond the gatehouse, which is not described in any detail, was a pavilion, apparently of a single storey surmounted by a columned loggia. The principal palace building, entered by a marble staircase, was a more grandiose structure with a central domed room decorated with stucco moulding and containing a fountain, and encircled by two storeys of smaller rooms. Feuvrier's description parallels this but adds that the palace had a clocktower on the right modelled on the fire towers of Nîmes. The remaining structure was the andarūn, located by Feuvrier at the bottom of the park to the left of the main palace.[65] This apparently consisted of a multistoreyed khwābgāh with a tālār on the first floor and andarūn quarters on the other side grouped around a court. The chalet system of ᶜIshratābād was not followed: the women were housed in more compact quarters of the traditional type. Certain features of these accounts are confusing, however. It is not possible to pinpoint accurately the exact positions of the various buildings both within the garden area and in relation to each other; obviously the opportunities available for accurate observation were limited, although it is surprising that Feuvrier, a member of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's court, did not attempt to plan the area as he did for the Gulistān Palace. Certain other details are puzzling; the functions of three buildings are clear, gatehouse, main palace and private quarters, but the purpose of the second pavilion mentioned by Orsolle is uncertain.

CERAMICS

The ceramics of the Qājār period have aroused little interest among scholars and collectors, as much because of a lack of information as from the prejudiced supposition that they are the last sorry products of a declining craft. The problems inherent in any impartial assessment of these late Persian ceramics are many. The objects themselves were fragile and easily damaged. Hence the amount that survives is unrepresentative. As this material has stimulated little interest, a manageable corpus of types has never been compiled; the holdings distributed through museums, for example, have never been adequately catalogued or described even in handlists. Supplementary sources, such as the European travel accounts and official reports, usually so informative on the material culture of Qājār Iran, are with few exceptions disappointingly brief or even silent on the subject of ceramics, possibly because they were not considered

[65] Feuvrier, pp. 234–5.

worthy of comment. Certainly surviving examples of ceramics are less varied and interesting than contemporary tilework. This would suggest that craftsmen's main efforts were channelled into the latter. A significant factor contributing to lack of local incentive was the competition created by the increasing volume of technically superior imports from Europe, which were much in demand as both fashionable curiosities and items of practical use.

Before the 19th century Iran had witnessed a vigorous ceramic production. Large quantities of wares ascribed to the 17th and early 18th centuries have survived, made of a fine white composite paste, employing a time-honoured formula of ground glass frit, quartz and clay, and glazed with a well-fitting transparent alkaline glaze. Variations in decorative technique included painting figurative and foliate designs, mainly influenced by those of Chinese Ming porcelain in underglaze blue, combining underglaze blue with overglaze polychrome enamels, employing softly coloured monochrome glazes over moulded decoration, and more rarely painting rather sketchy floral motifs in golden lustre over a colourless or deep blue glaze.

The wares produced in these techniques were certainly stylish and elegant and well-suited to the colourful Safavid interiors which they furnished. Problems, however, arise concerning their place of manufacture and details of the mechanics of production. Several European visitors to 17th-century Iṣfahān name places renowned for their ceramic manufacture, especially the jeweller Jean Chardin,[66] who gives the fullest list, naming Shīrāz, Mashhad, Yazd, Kirmān and Zarand. Attempts, however, to identify surviving examples with any of these centres can at best be described as tentative; no piece has yet come to light with a named and dated inscription giving unambiguous evidence of provenance. There are no large contemporary collections in Europe which can be matched with an inventory for, apart from a brief period from 1652 to 1682 when the records of the Dutch East India Company mention shipments of Persian pottery from Batavia, there is no evidence of any great export trade and the Safavid wares were for home consumption.[67]

From these Safavid wares the techniques of blue and white and polychrome painting continued into the Qājār period when stable conditions were again established at the end of the 18th century, and much later there is evidence of a revival of lustre painting. While Safavid Iran, though not producing on the scale of the Chinese factories which coped with both home and export markets, had made enough ceramics for the local needs with a comparatively modest surplus

[66] Chardin, *Travels in Persia*, pp. 267–8. [67] Volker, pp. 113–16.

during the period of Dutch trade, the available evidence would seem to indicate that demand and supply from the late 18th century onwards never reached even this level. Certainly there was no attempt to produce a surplus for the export market. In this context the comments of a committee appointed by the East India Company to report on Persian manufactures and trade in the 1780s are revealing. While textile and metalworking crafts are listed as individual items, ceramics are not even mentioned, which indicates that they were not considered worthy of attention.[68] In official reports this situation continues throughout the 19th century.

Evidence of the serious competition offered by imported wares may still be seen in the large quantitities of assorted types of 19th-century English ceramics for sale in antique and bric-a-brac shops, and at a more sophisticated level in the dinner services in the Gulistān Palace commissioned by Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh from the factories of Crown Derby and Wedgewood and inscribed with his name and the date 1234 (A.D. 1820). It may also be seen in the examples of Chinese famille-rose export porcelains, ranging from a plate decorated with a border of flower-sprays enclosing a Persian inscription dated 1201 (A.D. 1787)[69] to a more flamboyant group of bowls painted with designs of figures, birds and flowers framing a central inscription: "By order of his Majesty, the most happy, the most excellent, the highest, the most noble, the Sublime Sulṭān Masʿūd Mīrzā, amen to his dominion, the Ẓill al-Sulṭān 1297 (1880)."[70] This creation of export wares aimed at the Persian market was lamented by the French scientist Olmer writing in 1908:

> Mais le bon marché des vases de Chine et d'Europe, qui inondent les bazars, les a découragés de continuer leurs enterprises. Si l'on demande des bols, des tasses au bazar de Téhéran, et qu'on exige de la faience persane, on vous offre des objets ou est écrit derrière *Hadji Ali Akbar Téhéran* en caractères persans, mais ces vases sont fabriqués en Angleterre.[71]

Official reports of the early 1900s note that Russia was also supplying much pottery of a more humdrum nature and give reasons why it was easy to do so. "The Russian manufacturer caters for a large population in Russia with requirements similar to those of a large section of the Persian population and therefore does not need to manufacture cotton prints, common glass ware, pottery, paper, hardware and mercery, lamps, candlesticks and various articles of clothing expressly to suit the Persian market."

[68] East India Company, *Three Reports by the Select Committee Appointed by the Directors*, pp. 113–20; quoted in Issawi, p. 88.

[69] See Christie's, *Fine Chinese Export Porcelain and Works of Art, Monday, 14th March 1977*, item 124.

[70] See Sotheby Belgravia, *Oriental Ceramics, Works of Art and Furniture, Thursday 4th September 1975*, items 176 and 177.

[71] Olmer, p. 54.

Other factors which may have affected home-produced ceramics were the changing whims of Persian taste. Apart from the desire for foreign status-symbols, an abundance of other materials were available which could equally be used for the type of object fashioned in ceramic; vessels for food and drink, containers for jewellery and trinkets, qalyān pipe bases and ornamental vases could equally be made in metal or glass. Indeed, the evidence of surviving objects and representations in contemporary painting suggests that they were preferred, at least among the classes of society which could afford them. At the most affluent level, that of the Qājār court, enamelled and bejewelled gold was worked into vessels for serving food and drink, while in Qājār oil-portraits the languid sitters toy with imported glass goblets and decanters. Curzon, visiting Tehran in 1889, testifies to a widespread taste for glass objects:

> Another of the most widely-spread but unintelligible of modern Persian tastes is abundantly illustrated, and can be inexpensively gratified in the Teheran bazaars. This is the fondness, which seems to permeate all classes, from the Shah downwards, for lustres, candelabra, candle- and lamp-shades, and glass vases or ornaments of every conceivable description. I never entered a Persian prince's or nobleman's house without encountering a shop's window full of these articles, as a rule proudly stacked as though they were rare treasures, upon a table . . .[72]

All this evidence cumulatively leads to the conclusion that ceramics produced in Qājār times were for the domestic market. Despite the comparative lack of documentation in official sources, certain information about these ceramics was recorded by three Europeans, who concentrated on the Persian craft and industry traditions. They were a German physician, Jakob Polak, who lived in Persia for several years during the 1850s, the Frenchman Comte Julien de Rochechouart, who travelled in Persia in 1867, and L.J. Olmer, Professor of Physics and Chemistry at the Imperial Polytechnic of Tehran during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Their accounts are carefully observed and mutually consistent, though Olmer's naturally has a more pronounced bias towards the chemistry of glazes, so that between them they cover a sufficiently broad timespan to enable a reasonable picture of the industry in the late Qājār period to be formed. Valuable as their accounts are, however, they should be treated with a certain critical reserve because they do not include the finer details of shape and design which would enable them to be matched closely with surviving wares.

The first important factor to emerge is that the Persian ceramic industry was intensely localized, mainly due to a widespread availability of the necessary

[72] Curzon, vol. 1, p. 330.

ingredients and difficulties of transport and communications, which would have rendered trading from a few main centres impractical. Rochechouart lists the most centres, naming Hamadān, Kāshān, Mashhad, Nā'īn, Naṭanz, Qazvīn, Qum and Tehran, supplemented by Olmer who adds Maibud near Yazd. Curiously neither Iṣfahān nor Shīrāz, which were both important tile manufacturing centres, are mentioned. The 19th-century Persian source – the *Jughrāfiyā-yi Iṣfahān* of Mīrzā Ḥusain – however, does specifically mention a subdivision of the guild of potters who made flacons, jars, goblets, cooking pots, waterpipes – all strictly utilitarian wares.[73]

Qājār ceramics may broadly be classified into two main categories – unglazed everyday wares and more elaborate glazed and painted wares, of which there are several types.

Unglazed earthenware formed the most widely used class for everyday use, employing basic shapes that have remained virtually unchanged. This at its most humble level consisted of sun-dried clay on sale on the Iṣfahān bazaar as recorded by Dr Wills: "Pans for charcoal, jars for the storing of grain, are made of sun-dried clay, while a variety of burnt clay articles are exposed for sale."[74] A wider choice of vessels was available in kiln-fired earthenware, and although they were doubtless made in many places, Qum and Kāshān seem to have specialized in types of good quality. Rochechouart, Olmer and Polak all comment on the porous earthenware drinking vessels – *alkarezzas* – made at Qum, which could be either plain or decorated with figure and foliage designs in trailed slip. Olmer additionally remarks on the clay used in these vessels: "A Qoum, on emploie l'argile imprégnée de sulfate de soude, qu'on trouve, en si grande quantité dans les environs."[75] According to Wills other porous containers and drinking vessels were on sale at Iṣfahān "This ware is pale greenish yellow and very fragile; the best is made at Kashan."[76] In contrast to these strictly utilitarian wares, more sophisticated materials and techniques were employed in the groups of glazed wares, which may conveniently be divided into three types on a basis of glaze and decoration: monochrome, underglaze painted and overglazed painted ceramic.

Monochrome glazed wares formed the largest group and were related in shape and function to the unglazed everyday pottery. They were made throughout the 19th century and are still in production today. Wills sumarizes the main uses and colours which he found on sale in Iṣfahān: "a variety of burnt clay articles are exposed for sale; cheap kalian and chibouque heads, flower pots of

[73] Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, trans., p. 83 (text, p. 94). [74] Wills, ch.17, p. 191.
[75] Olmer, p. 51. [76] Wills, *loc. cit.*

blue, green and purple glaze." While Olmer mentions copper green, turquoise, and yellow glazes, and attributes a violet glaze to Maibud: "A Meiboud (40 kilometres au nord de Yezd) on fait des grandes jarres très solides, dont le vernis été coloré en violet. Je ne sais pas le procédé employé." Rochechouart gives further details about types and centres of manufacture of monochromes, saying that earthenware bottles, qalyān bases etc. with turquoise glaze were made at Qum, Hamadān, Qazvīn and Kāshān, the products of the latter being of especially good quality, involving the employment of about 100 potters.[77] From this it is evident that the commonest glaze was turquoise, which was easily made by combining copper oxides in an alkaline-based glaze. This technique was of ancient lineage in Persia, as it is known from large turquoise-glazed storage jars of the late Sasanian–early Islamic period. The wares during the Qājār period were generally made of a fine-textured orange or buff earthenware, the colour varying according to locally available clays, in simple shapes – open bowls, dishes, globular vases, pear-shaped vases with cylindrical necks etc., the quality and colour of the glaze again varying with the purity of the ingredients used.

The wares in which glazing was combined with painted decoration obviously provided more scope for variation, as is demonstrated by a range of surviving pieces. While their techniques are explicit, they do, however, present problems of identity concerning exact attribution and date. There are, for instance, certain discrepancies between the European descriptions and the wares themselves. Some general observations, however, emerge, which throw revealing sidelights on the significance of the import trade in ceramics. Rochechouart in his observations on the distinguishing qualities of contemporary polychrome wares notes that mainstream influence in design is Chinese, though he does not make it clear whether this is direct or at secondhand from the many types of European imported ceramics whose patterns had also been inspired by Far Eastern models.[78]

Contemporary evidence also supports the view that the ceramics were made in local centres and that attempts to introduce modern methods failed because there was no demand for them. For example "A porcelain factory belonging to Ḥājjī Muḥammad Ḥasan Amīn al-Żarb in Tehran, and another belonging to Ḥājjī ʿAbbās ʿAlī and Ḥājjī Riżā in Tabrīz, which had to close down because of Russian intrigues and cost the above mentioned close to 130,000 tumans in losses."[79] It seems that the Russians did not want their own ceramic imports threatened by improved local products.

[77] Rochechouart, p. 308. [78] Rochechouart, pp. 305–6.

[79] Jamālzāda, Muḥammad ʿAlī, *Ganj-i Shāygān* (Berlin, 1335/1917); quoted in Issawi, p. 309.

The fabric of polychrome glazed wares offered more choice. Earthenware continued to be used varying in quality of colour and texture, but another material was widely used, a composite paste made up of finely ground white clay quartz and a glassy frit. This produced a fabric varying from granular pinkish buff to a fine hard white texture and had been used in Persian ceramics since Saljūq times. Both Olmer and Rochechouart give recipes for this fabric and also for the glazes used with it.

Both earthenware and the composite fabric were used for wares decorated with designs painted before glazing. Qum, in addition to its monochromes, produced lamps and plates painted with designs in black before the application of a transparent turquoise glaze. A more distinguished group of wares is painted with designs in blue and attributed to Nāʾīn by both Rochechouart and Olmer, whose accounts are reasonably detailed. Rochechouart says that Nāʾīn wares are the only contemporary ones to be signed and dated and that they are painted with designs in cobalt blue. He is clear that they are made of a white composite paste, which he compares with the texture of English porcelain. The designs he relates to a mixture of Chinoiserie landscapes with pagodas into which Persian-type birds and cypress trees are blended. Olmer's account is more clear technically, as he describes material, glaze, composition of colours used, and the process by which designs are first pounced in outline, painted and then glazed. Rochechouart additionally states that underglaze painted blue pottery was made at Naṭanz, but apart from saying that the paste and glaze are inferior to those of Nāʾīn, does not give any distinguishing features. It is therefore preferable to attempt to identify surviving examples of 19th-century blue and white ceramics with the products of Nāʾīn (pl. 55*a*). Such wares were fashioned in a granular white paste which is pinkish-buff when exposed during firing, and formed into well-shaped shallow dishes, bowls with convex sides etc. A sequence of dated and signed examples are recorded ranging from 1281 (A.D. 1864–5) to 1318 (A.D. 1900–1), but production continued up to 1935 when carpet weaving replaced it as a more profitable industry. Designs were painted in a bright cobalt blue, which tended to run during firing, and included both the Chinese pagodas noted by Rochechouart, Persian birds and fishes, and also sprigs of flowers, which were perhaps inspired by imports of contemporary Staffordshire pottery.

Other examples of underglaze painted pottery employing a polychrome technique may be related to the Nāʾīn products. The fabric, glaze and shapes are similar, but the designs are rather sketchily painted in cobalt blue, manganese purple, brownish pink and black outline. They consist of sprays of flowers among rocks, amalgamating Chinese, Persian and contemporary European

motifs. While these polychrome underglaze wares are difficult to date more specifically than 19th century, a later group can be dated precisely and demonstrates a readily identifiable style. There is a representative collection of these wares in the ceramic collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, where they are recorded as having been made at Tehran in 1887; they were acquired at the same time as a technically and stylistically related group of tiles, obtained by Robert Murdoch Smith during his last visit to Persia in that year. They are made of a white composite paste of superior quality and texture to that of the Nāʾīn wares (pl. 55*c*), which is covered with a lustrous transparent alkaline glaze, which is usually well-fitting but has a tendency to crackle. The underglaze painted designs are in a varied palette of cobalt blue, turquoise, a subdued olive green, purple, yellow, pink and with black used to outline motifs and to create effects of hatching and shading. The shapes are accomplished and well potted in such varied forms as chalices, pear-shaped vessels with either flaring trumpet or long narrow necks, and flat-sided flasks, all with parallels in either the Persian or Far Eastern tradition. The designs are carefully organized into panels and medallions of fanciful shape and containing roses and carnations, reserved against a contrasting background, consisting of continuous bands of floral garland, zigzag and foliate scroll, and geometrical borders which serve mainly to section off areas of motifs. The painting is fluent, relying on washes of colour and the use of black outlining and shading to give a naturalistic effect. Several of the pieces are signed by the potter Ḥusain and Murdoch Smith indeed refers to "a number of modern vases made by the same potter Ali Mahommed who made the tiles above referred to",[80] indicating that, at least for this group of wares, potter and tilemaker might be the same. Curiously this distinctive group is not mentioned by Olmer, who was certainly in Persia during the period when they were produced. It did become known in Europe however to a certain extent, as examples were on sale in the Persian section of the 1889 Paris exhibition.

The group of wares decorated in overglaze painted enamel colours cannot be linked satisfactorily with any of the contemporary descriptions, yet dated pieces show that they were in production by the first half of the 19th century. Rochechouart, for example, attributes a polychrome composite paste ware painted in iron red, cobalt blue, copper green, chrome yellow, iron black, manganese violet, turquoise blue and orange-red, to Naṭanz and a less competent version of the same ware to Kāshān. He omits to state, however, whether the colours were applied before or after glazing. Probably the latter technique

[80] Smith, *Guide to the Persian Collection in the Museum.*

was used because most of the colours listed could only withstand the low heat of a secondary firing needed to fix them. He also gives no specific description of designs. In the absence of such identifying clues it is preferable to leave the question of provenance of overglaze polychrome wares open. While generally speaking the Persian taste for colourful pottery was satisfied by imports from Europe and the Far East, of which examples are depicted in early Qājār paintings – mainly famille-rose bowls and dishes with lavish sprays of roses and reticulate borders – a recognizable group of Persian polychrome wares was manufactured of which many pieces have survived. They were potted in a fine-textured orange-buff earthenware and covered with an opaque white tin oxide alkaline glaze, which prepared a surface suitable for decoration painted in bright enamels – cobalt blue, purple, rose pink, yellow, grass green, iron red, black and touches of gold. The shapes are flamboyant – large bowls and dishes, long necked vases – while the designs present an amalgam of Chinese and Persian motifs. From a series in the Victoria and Albert Museum a large bowl signed by ᶜAlī Akbar of Shīrāz and dated 1262 (A.D. 1846) shows these features, and is unabashed in its eclecticism (pl. 55*b*).[81] Both surfaces are extensively decorated. The interior sports a Qājār Lion and Sun framed by a fluently composed border of Chinese figures, trees, butterflies, rocks and peonies, with small Persian dervish figures lurking among them. Persian themes dominate the underside, which is sectioned into panels depicting traditional hunting scenes, ladies' receptions, and the theme of Shaikh Ṣanᶜān and the Christian maiden, all sectioned off by borders of the crowded peony and chrysanthemum patterns of famille-rose wares made at Canton for the export trade. The presence, however, of the carefully executed traditional Persian motifs suggests some comparison with similar representations in the meticulously painted lacquers and enamelled gold objects. The ceramics were possibly a cheaper means of imitating them. Other polychrome wares show how far designs migrated. There is, for example, a plate painted with a Chinese-inspired asymmetrical design of a crane among rocks, flowering peonies and chrysanthemums, which is more closely related to an original copied by the English ceramic firm of Mason onto its ironstone china, rather than to the Chinese original.

The last group of overglaze decorated wares, namely those painted in lustre, is little known. Lustre painting was thought to have died out after a brief resurgence in the 17th century, but it has now been shown to have had a continouous history up to the 19th century, both in ceramic objects and tile

[81] Victoria and Albert Museum London. Ceramics Department reg. no. 632. 1878.

production. Two objects, a vase and a jar in the Victoria and Albert Museum's collection, demonstrate the main features. They are potted in a granular pinkish-buff composite paste and painted in golden brown lustre over a white tin oxide glaze. They are painted with crowded designs in a technique comparable with that of contemporary manuscript illustration, as is shown by the seated masculine figures on the sides of the jar (pl. 57*a*).

In general the modern Persian ceramic industry essentially continues the traditions of the Qājār period, though at times increasingly under threat from the pressures of industrialization and the import of cheap foreign wares. As in Qājār times, workshops are small and localized and are declining in number except where there is sufficient demand for traditionally inspired wares. The monochrome turquoise glazed everyday wares – vases, flowerpots, qalyān pipe bases, shallow bowls – continue to be widely made. Recently the shallow bowls, once much in demand as yoghurt containers, were being replaced by plastic ones. Production of the underglaze blue painted wares, a speciality of Nā'īn, had already spread to Maibud in the late 19th century, where it continues today, though on a much reduced scale with a limited range of patterns. The production of underglaze painted composite paste wares now is the monopoly of Iṣfahān. They are of interest in that they continue traditional techniques which were curiously not featured as one of Iṣfahān's special crafts by the 19th-century Europeans who concerned themselves with Persia's ceramic wares.

METALWORK

The craft of metalworking was rather more healthily based in the Qājār period than that of ceramics. Metal was required for a much wider range of luxury and everyday objects and less at the mercy of competition from technically superior European imports. Unlike ceramics, metalwork is featured in references throughout 18th- and 19th-century sources which indicate how worthy of mention it was. The East India Company report of the late 18th century, for example, briefly summarising Iran's products, features "steel sword blades, spearheads . . . mines of iron and copper".[82] John Malcolm's assessment of Persian manufactures of 1801 states that they include ironwork, gold and silver articles and enamelled work. He cites Iṣfahān for its gold brocades, swords, other arms, and "utensils in gold, silver, iron, steel and brass". Shīrāz is mentioned for "guns, pistols, swords and other military arms," and "articles of

[82] East India Company, *op. cit.*

gold and silver", and "enamelled work".[83] Clearly a securely based industry catered for a wide range of local needs, but the sources indicate no surplus for export. The trade situation was rather the opposite: during the 19th century metal products faced competition from Russian imports. Abbott's trade report of 1841 records imports of "Russian iron, copper, hardware and glassware through Gilan at £15,000".[84] In 1904, H.W. Maclean remarked that Russian "metalwork, lamps, candlesticks, enamelled ironware" were considered "better in quality and finish at a given price than formerly".[85] Yet it is evident that local metalwork included luxury goods in enamelled gold and silver as well as more mundane products in copper, brass, iron, steel etc. Persian metals enamelled in polychrome enamels bear designs and are treated in a manner and technique directly comparable with those used in painted lacquers and have been discussed in chapter 23 (see e.g. pl. 28*a*, *b*), so that this section will concentrate on objects in other metals.

Qājār metalwork was another stage in a continuous history of metalworking in Iran. The country has metal ores, which have been exploited since the 5th millennium B.C. By the 19th century copper was the most plentiful in widely distributed deposits, as observers noticed.[86] Deposits in Anārak near Kāshān are still mined today using improved and up-to-date techniques. Also silver, lead, zinc, antimony and arsenic are found near Tehran on the northern slopes of the Alburz mountains, in the neighbourhood of Qazvīn and Mashhad, and at Qarādāgh near Tabrīz, the site of one of the most productive mines in the 19th century.[87] There were also rich supplies of iron ore, especially at Āmul in Māzandarān and in Khurāsān, while lead was mined in the Bībī Shahrbānū hills south of Tehran and at Kirmān, and tin ore in the Qarādāgh ranges of Tabrīz and on the southern slopes of the Alburz mountains near Astarābād. Stream tin was found near Anārak and Mashhad, both close to copper mines so that it is not difficult to see how methods of producing copper and tin alloys evolved. Despite this mineral wealth, however, 19th-century European sources show that lack of full exploitation was due to lack of adequate facilities. Polak comments on backwardness in mining skill and capability in using machines from Europe. Consequently indigenous metal sources had to be supplemented by importing supplies. Russia exported quantities of copper and iron from the

[83] Malcolm, John, *The Melville Papers*; quoted in Issawi, p. 262.

[84] Abbott, Report on Trade for 1841, 31st December 1841. FO 60/62; quoted in Issawi, p. 120.

[85] MacLean, H.W., Report on the conditions and prospects of British Trade in Persia. Parliament Accounts and Papers 1904; quoted in Issawi, p. 141. [86] Polak, quoted in Issawi, p. 272.

[87] Polak, *loc. cit.*

Urals, brass and iron sheetware and zinc, while England supplied worked iron and India, tin and iron to southern Iran.[88]

A wide range of specialist craftsmen existed to work materials made available. They included coppersmiths for the production of everyday cooking and household utensils, brassworkers who made both everyday and more ornate vessels in co-operation with brass finishers and polishers, tinsmiths and highly skilled workers who applied decorative techniques of repoussé, engraving, niello and inlay in gold and silver, and those who worked in iron and steel, especially armourers and cutlers. Such craftsmen would be organized into guilds and have workshops in a city's main bazaars and elsewhere. Mīrzā Ḥusain's geography of Iṣfahān details the many specialist metalworkers based there, of whom the brass and coppersmiths and locksmiths were flourishing in the late 19th century. He mentions another group of metalworkers who may be linked with textile production: the craftsmen who produced silver and gold wire thread for brocade weaving.[89] Copper was mostly used for everyday wares worked in traditional shapes and still in production today, though increasingly giving way to factory made products of aluminium and white-metal alloys. The chief items were cooking pots of various sizes, open flat trays, spouts of water containers and larger boilers for heating water for the ḥammām. These containers came in different sizes of the same basic shape – a wide based bowl with deep straight sides contracting slightly towards the mouth and with a narrow averted rim. They were made in various stages of hammering and annealing sheet copper. Small vessels were worked out of one piece. Larger ones required separate sections for the base and sides to be soldered with a dove-tail joint. The demand for these explains the copper imports from Russia, to supplement local supplies. After the coppersmith had completed his work the vessels, especially those to be used for food preparation, went to the tinsmith who surfaced the interiors with a thin layer of tin; he also resurfaced old cooking-vessels.

The craft of the brassworker while overlapping to some extent with that of the coppersmith was more versatile and included the preparation of finely decorated as well as everyday objects. Here Qājār craftsmen followed a tradition established in medieval times. Brass has become one of the most favoured metals for vessels, bowls, candlesticks, and boxes, and no anomaly was seen in decorating them with finely worked designs inlaid in precious gold and silver. By the late 15th century this decorative technique had given way to one in which

[88] Polak, *loc. cit.*; Olmer, p. 82.   [89] Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, p. 88.

designs were worked in a combination of repoussé and engraving, creating a surface of several levels of fine relief. The design repertoire also changed to include motifs of graceful foliage stems and tendrils trained into repeating and spiralling scrolls, medallions and continuous borders with flowers and occasionally human figures reserved against them. This decorative style which continued to develop in the Safavid period, matching the flamboyant peony and lotus-studded foliage designs of tilework and carpet, was inherited by Qājār craftsmen who further modified it.

One of the busiest centres of brass working was Iṣfahān where all types of wares were made Mīrzā Ḥusain records of the 1880s that "they have a big long special bazaar near the Maidān-i Naksh-i Jahān" where "they make samovars and other vessels that do not differ much from those of other countries".[90] In the making of samovars, however, introduced from Russia in the 19th century, they faced competition: "brass and iron sheetware, especially the popular Russian samovar are almost entirely imported from Russia".[91] Other strictly practical objects made by the brassworker included low rectangular or octagonal charcoal braziers used for heating rooms or cooking small meals, cooking vessels tinned like their copper counterparts, dishes and trays for serving food, and water ewers. Another practical craft was the making of discs to serve as tops and bases for the cylindrical lanterns made of oiled linen and used during the 19th century to light the way through a winding street at night before the introduction of gas street lighting. Items serving more luxurious and decorative purposes were made, such as sets of ewers and perforated basins used for washing hands at meals, rosewater containers, ornate candlesticks often with several heads, incense burners used for burning aromatic gums and plants, traditionally at marriage festivities and funerals, qalyān bases, large ornaments often in the form of peacocks or phoenix, and personal accessories such as pen cases, and cosmetic boxes (pls 56, 57*b*,*c*,*d*).[92] Shapes generally tended to be extravagantly curved – lampstands with cylindrical stems, ewers with flattened circular bodies, long necks, graceful handles and spouts, covered bowls and containers of a globular or pear-shape, often with pointed covers and set on high pedestal feet. The bold curved shapes were set off by the meticulous nature of the decorative techniques and motifs employed.

Of the many techniques for decorating surfaces, the most frequently used by the late 19th century, at least at Iṣfahān, was a combination of engraving and

[90] Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, p. 105 (text, p. 106). [91] Polak, in Issawi, p. 273.
[92] Smith, *Persian Art*, pp. 58–75.

piercing. Engraved sections of the design were worked in fine outline with details of background and features such as leaves either punched as a series of fine dots or drawn with hatched lines. Where pierced decoration was used, as in incense burners and vase covers, the same techniques applied with the background completely cut away. At their best, designs worked in these two techniques are graceful and ingenious with a controlled richness of surface texture and are naturally dependent on the choice of motifs and finesse of execution. From a comparison of the many surviving pieces so worked it is possible to itemize the main repertoire of motifs combined in various ways. Bands of finely worked zigzag tendril on a punched ground were used as borders and edgings, either singly or in multiple rows. A commonly used device for broad sweeps of background was a spiralling lotus-scroll of foliage tendril trained into interlacing and overlapping lobed medallions. This motif could either be engraved or worked in the openwork technique. Spaced against the background were medallions of various shapes including ovals, circles and scalloped lozenges. When circles and ovals were sometimes crowded into a consecutively organized repeating design, their outlines were defined by sinuous stems terminating in dragon heads. Within the medallions there was much scope for variation in the choice of finely engraved motifs, such as single animal figures, lions, gazelles, rabbits shown in profile, human figures (usually seated royal personages), equestrian figures, creatures of legend and fantasy, such as horned demons, animal combat motifs, including a lion attacking a cow or struggling with a dragon, zodiac emblems and group compositions rendered in miniature using hunting scenes and feasts with dancers and musicians. All these themes continue traditions established in medieval metalwork, but differing in detail.

Another area of the brassworkers' skill was the production of cult objects and the talismans of popular religion. Shīʿī Islam has a rich heritage of such traditions. Among the most striking, of which examples may still be seen, is the *saqqākhāna*, a public drinking fountain privately donated and made of sheet brass with a cylindrical tank from which three domes project. The largest central dome has an outstretched hand, the symbol of ʿAbbās, the standard bearer whose hand was cut off while bearing water to a wounded son of the Imām Ḥusain at Karbalā. Brass drinking bowls are attached to the tank by chains. Also found in other metals, iron or base silver, were tiny boxes to contain verses from the Qurʾān and worn as amulets, discs engraved with the Lion and Sun device and worn on both arms as talismans to keep up the wearer's strength, and

plaques engraved with figures of women and used by wives as charms to ward off rivals.[93]

The accounts of contemporary European travellers and officials indicate that Persia's manufactures in the field of weapons and arms and armour enjoyed a high reputation, especially during the Qājār period. Indeed examples of damascened steel spearheads, daggers, shields and helmets have survived to support this testimony. Persian smiths were expert in the difficult technique of forging steel to produce the watered silk effect known as damascening and decorated with interlacing designs worked in gold and silver inlay. As the 19th century progressed the rôle and products of the workers in steel changed, mainly through economic and social pressures. They were busy enough in late 19th century Iṣfahān according to Mīrzā Ḥusain – "they make steel parts such as top parts of water pipes [*sar-i qalyān*], sword grips [*kūmak-i shamshīr*], saucers for coffee cups, belts, lampions, Qur᾿ān cases [*qāb-i qur᾿ān haikalī*], steel helmets, pedals of middle parts of water pipes, iron mounting [*qubba*], of shields and a lot of utensils. Nowadays their products are used more than before. The members of this guild were formerly few in number; now they are still not a big group but there is a demand for their work and it is exported to Turkey and Egypt."[94] Several points arise from this account.

Clearly the steelworkers' reputation had continued sufficiently for a demand for their work to be sought abroad. The bulk of the objects made, however, are practical and utilitarian. The only examples of the armourer's craft are the steel helmets and parts of shields. Formerly a specialist armourer would have been in continuous employment fashioning helmets, chainmail shirts, cuirasses and brassards. However, with the reign of Muḥammad Shāh (1834–48) the Persian army experienced a drastic change of dress. Among the military reforms initiated by Henry Rawlinson at the request of the Persian Government was the introduction of European-style cloth uniform, rendering the armourer's craft obsolete. The surviving photographs of Persians in armour of the late 19th century depict performers in a taᶜziya play.[95] Iṣfahān was the centre of a flourishing theatrical tradition so that it is possible that this accounts for the shields and helmets referred to by Mīrzā Ḥusain. It is interesting to note that he does not differentiate specialists: presumably they could all turn their hand to making armour of a decent enough theatrical standard. Weapons continued to be made, though changed in character to suit the new military fashions; spears and battleaxes were no longer used but swords were an indispensable accessory

[93] For a survey of popular talismans see Tanavoli, *Saqqakhaneh*.
[94] Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, p. 104 (text p. 106). [95] See Hoeltzer, *op. cit.*

to Persian as much as to contemporary western military uniforms. According to Polak the blades of Shīrāz and Mashhad enjoyed a good reputation for quality. Otherwise firearms, rifles and pistols made to European models in the arsenals of Tehran, Iṣfahān and Shīrāz dominated.[96] At a more peaceful level, apart from the type of ironmongery mentioned by Mīrzā Ḥusain, steelsmiths directed their efforts to the manufacture of cutlery, again imitated from European models, and such items as scissors and locks. Among the objects of their craft which combine function and decoration were the graceful pan-balances used for weighing gold in the mints, and the perhaps fanciful versions of the gourd-shaped dervish's begging wallet which could be lavishly ornamented with engraved designs and inscriptions and further embellished with gold inlay. The technique of inlay, like the use of steel, had changed. Murdoch Smith writing in 1876 states that by this time two methods were used:

(1) fine gold or silver wire was applied to the surface of the article which had been roughened and scratched to make it adhere; the work was then finished by burnishing;
(2) a much more skimped method was used of simply fixing gold leaf to the metal steel surface by rubbing and burnishing with an agate or similar hard stone.

TEXTILES

Persia has a long tradition of excellence in the textile arts, outstanding for versatility in both material and technique. Luxurious silks, for example, of complex weave and design were famous from Sasanian times onwards. Persia's fame in the textile arts extended well beyond her frontiers. Medieval silks are recorded in the inventories of the Holy See in Rome for 1295 and have been found preserved in church treasuries at Regensburg and Danzig. Persian carpets are featured in medieval European paintings and were exported in Safavid times to Poland, while examples of Safavid costume were desirable items to be presented as diplomatic gifts. Textiles played a dominant rôle in many aspects of Persian life. Apart from their obvious use for clothing and accessories they were especially important as domestic furnishings. At all levels of traditional life elaborate suites of free-standing furniture were not used. Rooms were empty by Western European standards, with floors covered by soft carpets worked in various techniques, and niches set into the walls to hold objects. The only other

[96] Smith, *Persian Art*, pp. 60–1.

items might be chests, bookstands, and braziers for heating and cooking. Otherwise a room's main furnishings consisted of additional textiles – curtains, cloths spread out on the floor at mealtimes, bedding, quilts, cushions; this lack of fixed furniture meant that rooms were more adaptable than in the West. Apart from these textiles of settled life, a vigorous parallel tradition existed in the fabrics woven for tents, furnishings and animal trappings used by migratory tribes. These textile traditions continued into the Qājār period when, although faced by competition from imported machine-made goods, they still produced creations of fine workmanship and design, ranging from the work of professional weavers to the embroideries produced in a domestic environment. European sources for the 18th and 19th centuries present a consistent picture of a viable textile industry. In the 1780s for example it was noted that among other items "The manufactures and produce of Persia are silks, brocades, carpets",[97] thus presenting a pattern essentially unchanged since Safavid times. This situation evidently continued into the early 19th century to judge from the specific notes taken by Sir John Malcolm during his visit of 1801: "The manufactures of Persia that are in demand all over that Empire, are silks of various kinds, coarse cotton cloths, plain and coloured Nummuds, cotton cloths, Kirmaun shawls, gold cloths etc".[98]

He specifies Iṣfahān, Yazd, Kāshān and Rasht as thriving centres of textile production, notably of silks, gold brocades, fine wools and carpets. These fabrics were of sufficient interest to be exported and were especially important in the transit trade centres of Turkey and Egypt. They were generally brought westwards by Persian travellers: "These men some of whom are real Persians, some Armenians and some Turkomans from the Khanates of Bukhara and Khiva, undertake their long journeys not always out of commercial interest but in order to make the pilgrimage to Mecca or for some other reason. They always pick up, within their financial means, goods in the Persian producing towns through which they pass, usually weapons, lacquer work, marquetry, shawls, rugs and silk fabrics. With these they trade during the whole of their journey. Part of their stock is sold in Erzerum and Trebizond, the greater part in Constantinople, and the rest in Smyrna or Alexandria. The proceeds serve for the purchase of European manufactures, which they sell in the remote towns of Asia from which they came."[99] Apart from these resourceful travellers there was a group who traded on a more regular basis, especially the Armenians from

[97] Issawi, p. 88. [98] Malcolm, *Melville Papers*, in Issawi, p. 262. [99] Issawi, p. 100.

Tabrīz, Tiflis and Erivan who brought shawls and precious stones to Constantinople in exchange for European manufactured goods.

Evidence emerges early for the competition offered to Persian textiles by imports. According to the Russian traveller, L. Berezin, by 1836 cottons, calicos, broadcloth, muslins and velvets were being imported into Tabrīz; for example 10,000 parcels of English cottons and calico with a value of two and half million silver rubles."[100] In return Tabrīz sold large quantities of silk, dyes and shawls. This competition from foreign textile imports was to continue and increase throughout the 19th century. By 1904 woollen, cotton and silk materials were being imported from France and Austria, but the monopoly in bright printed cottons was held by Russia.[101]

In contrast, Iran's textile exports mainly consisted of carpets to Europe, America and Turkey, while their silks, cottons and wools were channelled into an Asian market consisting of Afghanistan and Turkey. Raw cotton was, however, exported to Russia and much of it, ironically, must have made the return journey as woven cloth.

Iran did attempt to counteract the challenge of imported European textiles. Efforts were made to establish textile enterprises during the first half of the 19th century, such as a linen factory in Iṣfahān, and two silk-reeling factories, one in Gīlān equipped with machinery sent from Lyons by the Berthaud firm and another near Rasht, founded with Russian capital, but which failed because of political intrigues and poor management. A much more concentrated series of projects would, however, have been necessary to produce goods effectively to eliminate foreign imports. The Amīr-i Kabīr, Mīrza Taqī Khān, Nāṣir-al-Dīn Shāh's prime minister from 1848 to 1851, was concerned to develop local industry. He established a calico-weaving factory on the Tehran–Shamīrān road and a silk factory in Kāshān. He was also interested in the establishment of a broadcloth factory and gave instructions for master craftsmen from Austria and Prussia to be hired to teach Persians the necessary techniques.[102]

One of the most important textile industries of Qājār Iran was silk-weaving. Combining the evidence of contemporary accounts with information deduced from surviving examples, it is possible to construct a reasonably clear picture of the situation and the competition offered by European imports. Sources exist for studying the industry from the early 19th century onwards. Sir John

[100] Berezin, L., *Puteshestvie po severnoi Persii* (Kazan, 1852); quoted in Issawi, p. 106.
[101] Cf. above, pp. 956–8.
[102] Ādamīyat, Faridūn, *Amīr-i Kabīr va Īrān* (Tehran, 1334/1955); quoted in Issawi, p. 293.

Malcolm's report of 1801, for example, while stating generally that silks of various kinds and gold cloths were much in demand throughout Persia, more specifically records: "The silks manufactured at Resht, are more esteemed than any other in Persia. They bear a higher price than those of Cashaun and Yezd, and their consumption is thereinfore not so great."[103] The importance of Rasht is hardly surprising. It is the major city of the Caspian provinces of Gīlān and Māzandarān, long the major centres of silkworm cultivation. Later the British Consul at Tehran, K.E. Abbott, who periodically visited the Caspian region to study the silk industry, reported in 1849–50 that Kāshān had 800 silk looms in operation, Iṣfahān 200 and Yazd 300 to 350.[104] It would seem that Rasht had declined from its prominence in the silk industry as Abbott's comments agree with the observations of Jakob Polak, who was writing about Persian handicrafts and manufactures of the 1850s.[105] His account, while lacking precise figures of workshops in production, gives more detail about the types of product. He also gives some indication of the quality of these products and the challenge they faced from European imports. He lists Kāshān, Yazd – "which makes the most beautiful fabrics" – Iṣfahān, Tabrīz and Mashhad as the most important centres of manufacture. While conceding that Persian silks have good colourfast dyes, he generally thinks that they are inferior to European products. The specialities of each area were plain taffeta at Kāshān and Mashhad, checked designs at Yazd and Iṣfahān, and door curtains from Gīlān. More elaborate brocades with gold floral designs and twillweave jacquard silks woven with palms, wreathes and patterned borders, were woven at Kāshān and Yazd respectively. European competition was particularly strong in such fabrics as moiré silk and velvet.

Murdoch Smith writing 20 years later in 1876 testifies that the centres of Yazd, Kāshān and Rasht were still in production. He is more precise about the products of Iṣfahān. There patterned gold and silver brocade was made up into the petticoats and trousers of Persian women's costume.[106] The picture which emerges is general, concentrating on the main areas of production with only brief references to the textiles. The sources reveal little about the craftsmen involved, the degree of specialization required, and the classification of the textiles; but the questions thus left unanswered can to some extent be resolved by reference to Persian sources and by analysis of surviving textiles.

[103] Malcolm, in Issawi, p. 263.

[104] Abbott, Notes on the trade, manufactures and productions of various cities and countries of Persia. FO 60/165; quoted in Issawi, p. 267.

[105] Polak, *Persien*, in Issawi, pp. 269–71.

[106] Smith, *Persian Art*, p. 53.

Concerning the conditions of work and specialists involved, Mīrzā Ḥusain, writing in 1877, is informative about the situation in Iṣfahān.[107] Traditionally Iṣfahān had been an important centre for the manufacture of sophisticated silk brocades lavishly embellished with gold and silver thread. Mīrzā Ḥusain shows that a nucleus of skilled craftsmen was still at work, but he notes that their numbers had declined through lack of commissions and because of emigration to the more prosperous towns of Tehran and Tabrīz. Despite this his account is enlightening on the condition of a once flourishing industry. He carefully distinguishes between craftsmen who supplied materials and those who carried out the weaving. There were, therefore, groups of craftsmen who prepared silver and gold wire, which was then passed over to the brocade weavers. He says that the designs used were prepared by master painters and then copied into a format suitable for a weaver's chart.

Evidence of the types of silk and brocade woven is provided by surviving examples and fabrics depicted in 19th-century oil paintings whose meticulous style is invaluable for detail of costume, jewellery, etc. (pls. 9, 12, 13*b*, 18, 19, 20, 21*a*). Several weaves of silk were used. There were fine plain weaves dyed in colours of black, dark green, dark blue and also more intense bright reds and oranges. From the more elaborate weaves the most outstanding are the complex brocaded textiles which involved the combination of metallic threads wound round a silk core, and coloured silks. Generally in this type of brocade the metallic threads were used to give a closely-woven subtle background on which designs were worked in coloured silks – crimson, purple, blue, yellow, green – often using floating wefts to give a satin effect. Such textiles of a high quality in both technique and design continued the traditions of Safavid weaving. The design motifs, however, are different, principally consisting of variations on repeated floral sprigs or pointed cones. Other than silk the wool weaves of Persia had a high reputation. Here the most notable type was a fine twill weave using goat fleece woven into elaborate repeating patterns closely resembling those of the Kashmir shawls which were made at Kirmān. Malcolm in 1801 refers to the shawls of Kirmān as one of the manufactures of Persia so much in demand that Yazd shawls of a wool and silk mixture were woven in an attempt to capture some of the market.[108] The Kirmān shawls were made of a special type of fibre, namely the underfleece of a particular species of white goat. When spun this fleece produced a woollen thread of the desired fine and silky texture. The manufacture of these shawls flourished at the time of Abbott's visit of 1849–50.

[107] Cf. Issawi, pp. 279–81. [108] *Ibid.*, p. 262.

He records 2,200 shawl-weaving looms in the town. To a lesser extent shawls were also woven at Mashhad, but of a cheaper and inferior quality to those of Kirmān.[109] Shawl fabrics were much in demand for mens' coats, either the short long-sleeved jacket or the long full-skirted frock coat which, alternating with a plain dark coat, became standard dress among officials from the 1840s onwards.[110] Surviving examples of textiles show that the main colours were either natural cream or deep red, woven in a firm even 2 × 2 twill. Considerably sophisticated polychrome effects were achieved by using wefts of blue, green, orange, and yellow, worked with subtlety and skill into well-composed designs based on the traditional floral cone, which achieved an integrated surface texture by overlapping stems and tendrils. They are among the most successful textiles of 19th-century Persia in quality of technique and composition, whose repeating patterns made them especially suitable for cutting and making into clothes.

A distinctive group of textiles were the cotton calicos printed with vivid polychrome designs by means of carved wooden blocks. These *qalamkārī* textiles were the speciality of Iṣfahān and have been made there at least since the 17th century. They are mentioned admiringly by the jeweller Chardin: "A work they understand very well is overlaying with Gold and Silver Linnen Cloth, Taffety and Settin; they do it with Moulds, and represent on them what they please, viz. Letters, Flowers, and Figures; and they stamp them so neatly that you would think 'tis Gold or Silver embroidery. They print with Gum-water."[111]

This is clearly a reference to qalamkār work, and some of the techniques and processes described by Chardin can be identified from the more detailed accounts preserved in later sources. Apart from this specialized function, basic cotton cloth was woven by households to supply their everyday needs for clothing and furnishing. Additionally, a firm strong cloth was woven professionally at Qum, Simnān and Ābāda, while a finer more close-textured fabric which would take dyes well was made at Iṣfahān, Yazd and Kāshān.[112] The domestic industry, however, did experience competition from imported cottons by the 1850s: "The most widely used calicos in Persia (chit) are usually supplied by Manchester factories, where goods are made to suit Persian taste and for sale in the Orient. The merchandise comes either directly from England through the Greek firm of Ralli brothers or through intermediaries in Constantinople, Trebizond, and Tabriz".[113]

[109] Issawi, pp. 267, 269, citing Abbott and Polak.

[110] Maslenitsyna, *Persian Art in the Collection of the Museum of Oriental Art*, pl. 122; portrait of Hājjī Mīrzā Āghāsī in 1841, wearing patterned twill weave wool coat.

[111] Chardin, *Travels*, p. 279. [112] Polak, *loc. cit.* [113] Polak, *loc. cit.*

By the 1870s the monopoly of fine cotton cloth had, according to Murdoch Smith, passed to the foreign imports. Writing about qalamkārī he says: "In former days very fine cotton cloths were woven in Persia, but their manufacture has now ceased owing to the introduction of the cheaper fabrics of England. The finer kind of printing is therefore now applied to foreign cloths only".[114] Supporting evidence of this economic situation is also independently provided by contemporary Persian sources. Mīrzā Ḥusain records of the Iṣfahān bazaar: "All of them are workshops of the textile printers and they comprise 284 shops, stores [*ḥujra*] and manufacturies [*kārkhāna*]. Their products are still used all over Iran, but the European textiles have ruined their market and not even half of the original number remain."[115]

Whether the material used for block printing was of Persian or foreign manufacture nothing could detract from the charm of the end product, made up into many items of clothing – women's trousers and jackets, and furnishings – curtains, bedcovers, tablecloths. The craft and its elaborate series of processes captured the imagination of 19th-century European residents and visitors in Iṣfahān. They have left accounts of varying degrees of detail and accuracy. One of the processes endlessly recorded was the vivid and colourful scene presented by the workers who washed and rinsed the lengths of printed calico in the waters of the Zāyinda-rūd and spread them on the banks to dry. The account written by Dr C.J. Wills of the Persian Telegraph Department is particularly noteworthy.[116]

These accounts show that repeated washings and rinsings were an essential part of the process, but this was only the simplest of a complex series of production stages. The first step involved preparation of the cotton ground fabric, either left white or dyed a beige yellow with pomegranate rind. Then the designs were hand-printed using a combination of carved pearwood blocks, one for each colour. The colours used were based on vegetable and mineral dyes – madder, indigo and pomegranate rind for red, blue and yellow respectively and an iron compound for black. The selected motifs were printed first in fine black outline and then coloured in red and blue, using additional blocks carefully aligned to give a clean impression. Secondary colours of orange and green were occasionally used and were made by overprinting red on yellow and yellow on blue respectively. Once all the printing was completed the cloths were thoroughly dried and then washed at the river. The final results were decorative and hardwearing with fast colours.[117]

[114] Smith, *Persian Art*, p. 56. [115] Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, p. 83; cf. Issawi, p. 279.
[116] Wills, p. 194.
[117] Smith, *Persian Art*, pp. 55–8; Wulff, *Traditional Crafts of Persia*, pp. 225–7.

Despite the relatively limited colour-scheme, much could be achieved by a careful and imaginative choice of motif. Surviving pieces display a great versatility of design. The basic repertoire consisted of blocks depicting floral motifs, leaf scrolls etc. which could be made up into infinitely repeating designs, or bold individual motifs of peacocks, tigers, elephants, cypress trees, human figures and medallion segments composed into more ambitious schemes. Cloth printed with continuous small repeating designs – floral sprigs, floral cones, lozenges enfolding florets, small zigzag stripes – were particularly suitable for making up into clothes, such as the closefitting jackets with flared peplum waists and long trousers worn by women. As an additional luxury some of these cloths had stippled detail painted in gold; this was clearly the practice of overlaying with gold and silver described by Chardin. Cloths supplied ready for some specific purpose, such as a curtain, tablecloth or bed cover, could be printed with a more formally composed design. Curtains, for example, could be printed with a one-way design; here a favourite composition of motifs was a tall cypress tree against a floral background with peacocks and tigers grouped around its roots. There was scope for more grandiose designs such as compositions clearly related to miniature paintings of figure and narrative scenes and hunting episodes. Here many of the details were painted over a blockprinted foundation composition. Rectangular cloths printed for use as bedcovers could employ symmetrical designs and here a close parallel with contemporary carpet design should be noted. A typical scheme would involve an elaborate circular of quatrefoil central medallion with a quarter medallion (pl. 58) at each corner reserved against a field of floral scroll, sometimes scattered with birds and framed within a series of borders and guard strips. Many of the pieces were additionally printed with the names of the workshop in a neat cartouche at one end; for example many of the pieces in the Royal Scottish Museum's collection came from the workshop of Aḥmad Muḥammad Ḥusain Ḥājjī Āghā.[118] Occasionally a cartouche would include a date. *Qalamkārī* literally means "pen-work": these textile designs resemble the decorations with which calligraphers adorned manuscripts, both in motifs and borders or margins.

Perhaps the most widely used and decoratively varied group of textiles were those ornamented with embroidery, since all types of weave and fabric were used – cotton, wool, silk, velvet. The embroidery itself was worked in an equally wide range of threads – cotton, silk, wool, gold and silver metallic thread. Embroidery was also a craft as much within the scope of the skills of domestic needleworkers as of professional craftsmen as it required no equipment beyond

[118] Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh. Five lengths of unused *qalamkārī* printed with designs of repeated medallions and stripes, reg. nos. 1883.340, 341, 345, 346, 348.

the materials, needles and at times a frame, depending on the scale of the work. Embroidered textiles were used for both articles of clothing and furnishing. In general a high standard of workmanship and design is common to all types of Persian embroidered textiles and many techniques of stitch and combination of colour were explored. Among the most interesting features are the close relationships with other textile forms both in technique and design; a group of embroideries from Kirmān closely resemble the fine jacquard twill wools, and many of the designs employed compare closely with the formal arrangements of medallions and quarter medallions to be found in knotted pile carpets and block printed textiles.

Since there are problems in the exact identification of Persian embroideries with centres of origin, it is more practical to group them primarily according to design and secondarily to provenance, where there is reasonable supporting evidence. One of the largest groups of embroidered fabrics consists of firmly woven cotton or silk generally in a creamy white or occasionally lemon yellow colour, comparable to the background also used for the block printed textiles, which was then embroidered in silks of strong shades of crimson, orange, blue, yellow, green and black. Again the colour-scheme may be compared with that of the block-printed textiles. Nineteenth-century embroideries of this type were worked in neat outline stitches such as chain stitch and maintained a fine balance between design and background. Especially fine are a group of small embroidered covers used either as prayer mats or simply as floor seats, worked generally in designs which are variations on a symmetrical scheme based on either central lobed or circular medallions or flowering trees. The medallions are filled with radiating palmettes and flowers and may be reserved either against a plain ground or one scattered with leaf scroll and floral sprays; sometimes the background was quilted in a repeated lattice.

The tree motifs usually bore stylized poppy or carnation flowers and were framed within a floral arch. In both types of design the main elements were confined within a floral scroll border. In such a formally organized scheme the component motifs were treated in a graceful manner full of movement to counteract any possibility of stiffness. The parallels with designs of carpets, printed textiles and the art of the book are evident. Although it is not at present possible to link them definitely with any known centre, it is probable that they were made and used over a wide area. The cities of Kāshān, Iṣfahān, Shīrāz and Yazd have been canvassed as main centres. On the basis of such close similarity with the designs of the printed textiles, so much a speciality of Iṣfahān, it would seem that a case could be made for that city at least as a principal centre.

Another specialized type of coloured embroidery relied for its effect by

covering the entire surface of the cloth with closely worked stitches (pl. 59). Here obviously the ground fabric was of secondary importance and only required to be of a sufficiently strong weave to support the density of stitch. Therefore a strong white cotton calico was used. The basic design was outlined in back stitch using black or dark blue thread, and all areas were then filled in completely in brightly coloured silks or wools in small neat stitches. The final result resembles contemporary European *petit point* work, except that the direction of the stitches is rather more random. The designs invariably consisted of repeated oblique stripes of flower spray – peony and carnation – and may be compared to the compound weaves of bias woven borders in Safavid silk brocades. Perhaps the embroideries had developed as a cheaper substitute for these expensive and sophisticated weaves. They were principally used for the loose trousers of women's costume of the late 18th and early 19th century, of which examples may be seen in contemporary oil paintings.[119] Their use for such and other purposes during this period, and evidence that they were made at least in Iṣfahān, is provided by Mīrzā Ḥusain who discusses the embroiderer's guild:

> "Everything the painters designed was drawn on *qudak*, *chalvārī* [longcloth] etc. and these designs were embroidered completely with a needle, in either pure silk, in *kurūk* [down], or in threads of different colours . . . The best were worn by the nobles, the average quality by middle class women. . . . This cloth had other uses too, such as for mantelshelves [*tāqcha pūsh*], cradles [*naᶜnī*], swaddling clothes [*qandāqa*], portfolios [*maḥfaẓa*], cushions of the place of honour of the rooms [*pushtīhā-yi bālā-yi uṭāq*], packsaddles [*pālān*] and the like. Most of it was sold to customers in Turkey, Egypt, India, Turkistan and Afghanistan. Some also was sold to Europe. . . . From the time of the late Shah [Muḥammad Shāh, 1834–48] to the present day the trade has gradually declined and fallen into disuse.[120]

An interesting footnote to the statement that some of this embroidery made its way to Europe is provided by two men's waistcoats in the Schweizerisches Landesmuseum at Zurich. They have been made from pieces of this embroidery worked in an oblique floral striped design by skilful cutting and arranging so that in one example the stripes converge to a "V" at the front and in the other they slope continuously from left to right. Both waistcoats have been tailored in the fashion current in Europe during the 1830s and 1840s, which coincides with the last stages of use of this embroidery in Persian clothes.[121]

An elegant and exquisite form of embroidery was the cut and drawn

[119] See Falk, *Qajar Paintings*, pls. 5 & 7 for examples of representations of women's embroidered trousers. [120] Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, p. 91 (text, p. 99).
[121] Schneider, "Buntgestickte Herrenwesten".

threadwork usually worked in fine white or cream silk on a finely woven cotton ground of the same colour. Here the effect depends on the contrast between the texture of the stitch and the sheen of the thread against the background. The embroidery was worked in blocks of smooth satin-stitch, needleweaving, and cut and drawn threadwork stitches, all of which required great technical precision to achieve the final delicacy of effect. The repertoire of design motifs was varied and based on lozenges, triangles, hexagons etc. to produce formal geometric patterns. From its very nature this type of needlework was used for small articles such as covers for gifts and small prayer-mats. One special use was for a unique accessory of Persian women's outdoor dress – the face-veil. This consisted of a long rectangular piece of white or cream cotton, occasionally silk, which was put over the face and fastened behind the head over the black, all-enveloping chādur, a semi-circular cloak draped to form a tent-like concealment. At eye-level the veil was pierced with a hexagonal lattice of cut and drawn threadwork to permit a certain limited vision to the wearer. More luxurious veils had the lattice embroidered in silver thread. Such veils could be the work of domestic embroideresses though Mīrzā Ḥusain records of a group of Iṣfahān craftsmen, the *sukma* makers (*sukma dūz*), that: "They are those men and women who make the open-worked part of women's face-veils [*shabīka-yi rūbanda*]. Their number has remained the same as before."[122] They stayed in business while other crafts declined because of the extreme conservatism of this aspect of women's dress; the face-veil was still worn in Persia until the 1930s.[123]

Two especially striking types of embroidery, on the evidence of surviving pieces, were the work of professional rather than domestic craftsmen. The first type was reserved for large items such as covers, saddlecloths, and occasionally carpets, where a particularly luxurious effect was required. Against a background fabric of velvet – usually a deep crimson red in colour – designs were embroidered in gold and silver threads in a couched technique. Here the threads were laid over the design area and stitched down with silks of a finer texture which could be pulled through the velvet without causing puckering and tears. Motifs were appropriately flamboyant – birds, flowers, medallions, deeply curving foliage scroll, inscriptions in bold calligraphy – and formed dense blocks of gold and silver to contrast with the rich monochrome background. The second type is perhaps more interesting in that several techniques were employed – mosaic patchwork supplemented by appliqué and embroidery. This work seems to have been the speciality of the Caspian town of Rasht where John

[122] Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, p. 93 (text, p. 100).
[123] Scarce, "The development of women's veils in Persia and Afghanistan".

Malcolm noted it in 1801.[124] Murdoch Smith writing in the 1870s confirms that it continued to be mainly produced in Rasht, although he adds that to a certain extent it was made in Iṣfahān.[125] Production involved an intricate and painstaking technique of easing together all the various shaped pieces so that they could be neatly joined into a smooth-surfaced fabric. Details were added as small appliqué pieces. Finally all the seams were concealed with embroidery, usually in lines of silk chainstitch. Decorative themes varied from symmetrical floral compositions, relatively simple to produce, to elaborate compositions with flowers and birds and sometimes figure subjects. These bright attractive textiles were popular among both Persians and Europeans and put to varied uses. Murdoch Smith records that they were made up as saddle cloths, horse blankets, floor covers and "now-a-days for table, sofa and chair covers where intercourse with Europeans has introduced such articles of furniture".[126] The versatility of Rasht patchwork is epitomized in three large curtains in the Historical Museum at Bern which are decorated each with a lifesize portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh (pl. 60), a prince, and a court dancing-girl obviously derived from early Qājār oil paintings.[127]

One of Iran's most justifiably famous textile products was the carpet woven in an infinite number of rich polychrome designs with knotted wool or silk cut pile on a wool, cotton or silk foundation. Carpets had always played a necessary rôle in traditional Persian life as interior furnishings and were equally valued as important items in the export trade with Europe from the 16th century. These two rôles continued into the Qājār period with increasing emphasis on the export trade. Foreign companies invested in factories in Persia. A proper assessment, therefore, belongs more to the field of economic history and is in any case too extensive and complex to be fully discussed here.

Traditionally four main groups were distinguished – luxury products woven in special manufacturies for court use; carpets woven in towns such as Kāshān, Kirmān, Tabrīz, Iṣfahān, Mashhad; village weaves; and finally nomadic tribal products. During the Qājār period, while rural and tribal people continued to weave for their own requirements, certain developments occurred in both village and town to ensure the production of an export surplus. The Tabrīz merchants, with their trade outlets through Erivan and Trabzon, dominated the export market by the late 19th century and promoted the establishment of new

[124] Malcolm, *Melville Papers*, in Issawi, p. 263. [125] Smith, *Persian Art*, p. 55.

[126] Smith, *loc. cit.*

[127] Bern Historical Museum Switzerland. Three examples of Rasht patchwork curtains: portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh (M.T. 319); portrait of Prince ʿAbbās Mīrzā (M.T. 320); portrait of a court lady (M.T. 321).

city workshops and village cottage industry. As a result, by 1874[128] there were 150 workshops in Mashhad, 5,000 looms in the villages around Sulṭānābād (Arāk) and 1,000 in Kirmān province. Eventually foreign investment entered the Persian carpet trade. The Manchester-based firm of Ziegler and Co. in 1883 established their own factory at Sulṭānābād. By the late Qājār period a pattern emerges of mixed enterprises in the carpet industry: town workshop, village cottage industry and foreign-sponsored factory.

While carpet production was distributed fairly evenly throughout Persia, certain areas were famous – Tabrīz, Mashhad, Kāshān, Kirmān, Iṣfahān, Hamadān, the comparatively new centre of Sulṭānābād, and the villages of Kurdistān. Their export products concentrated on richly patterned carpets in sizes to suit European and American interiors with designs based on combinations of floral and medallion motifs in colours adapted to the customers' taste. It would however, be wrong to assume that the domestic market in carpets had declined.[129]

Surviving examples of carpets made for the domestic market, while seemingly bewildering in the range of their designs and colour-schemes, on careful examination can be classified into a few main groups. Common to all, however, and in harmony with the lavishness of interior decoration, is a definite taste for elaboration of design motif. The most popular group of designs, certainly in the early 19th century, were those based on combinations of floral motifs. These varied from graceful and symmetrical schemes of floral palmettes on backgrounds of close-textured leaves, through repeated open flowers in a lattice to vertical rows of fluent zigzag floral scroll (pls. 61, 62). Colour schemes were both rich and subtle, balancing deep reds, dark blues and oranges, with lighter tones of green, turquoise and beige. By the late 19th century, however, a more flamboyant taste is seen in the floral designs which are paralleled by contemporary developments in architecture and tilework. This takes the form of, for example, exuberant beribboned floral bouquets in bright colours strewn across a light background, and peony palmettes and foliate scroll swirled and trained within medallions of curious curved shapes, which in turn are reserved against a ground of contrasting colour.

While the carpet with floral designs remained a constant item of the home market, a taste for large-scale pictorial designs began to develop (pl. 63). Themes were derived from Persian tradition, the epic and romantic poems of Firdausī's *Shāhnāma* and Niẓāmī's *Khusrau and Shīrīn* and *Lailā and Majnūn*, always subjects

[128] Report of the British Consul at Tabriz 1874; quoted and discussed in Issawi, p. 302.
[129] See for example, Wills, p. 57.

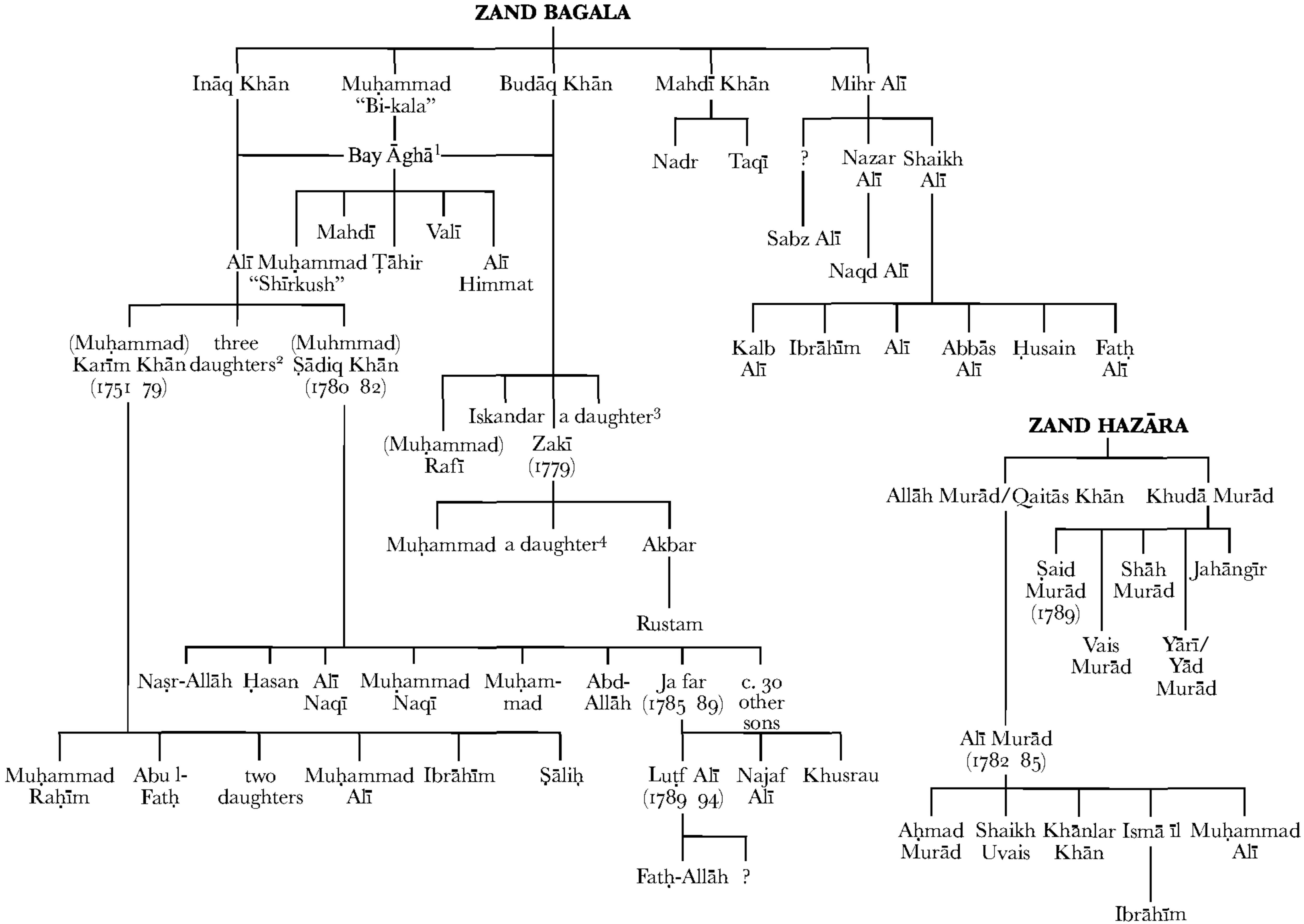
of book illustration, lacquer and tilework decoration. But motifs were also taken from those of foreign origin, introduced into Iran in prints, engravings and photographs. Foreign customers generally preferred designs which combined the exotic and unfamiliar with the ability to harmonize with their furniture and interior decoration. The pictorial designs based on traditional themes further adorned by inscriptions in graceful calligraphy would be more to the taste of the cultured Persian, and European-inspired scenes might appeal to a desire for novelty. Pictorial carpets were usually highly accomplished examples of the weavers' technique. They had to be worked in extremely fine knotting to permit subtleties of colour, shading and hatching, depending on the degree of realism required. This naturally was greater in carpets whose subjects were copied from photographs with stippling and hatching. One particular example appropriately summarizes the interplay of Persian and European-inspired themes. It is a finely knotted wool rug probably made in a Kāshān workshop. The design is dominated by a graceful traditional Persian flowering tree (pl. 64). An examination of the animals which are perched on its branches, however, reveals an extraordinary menagerie – the lion, a favoured Persian motif, alongside such "invaders" as the monkey, anteater, mongoose and duck-billed platypus. It would be interesting to identify both the European zoological illustrations which inspired this menagerie, and how its features arrived in Iran.

GENEALOGICAL TABLES

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE AFSHĀRS

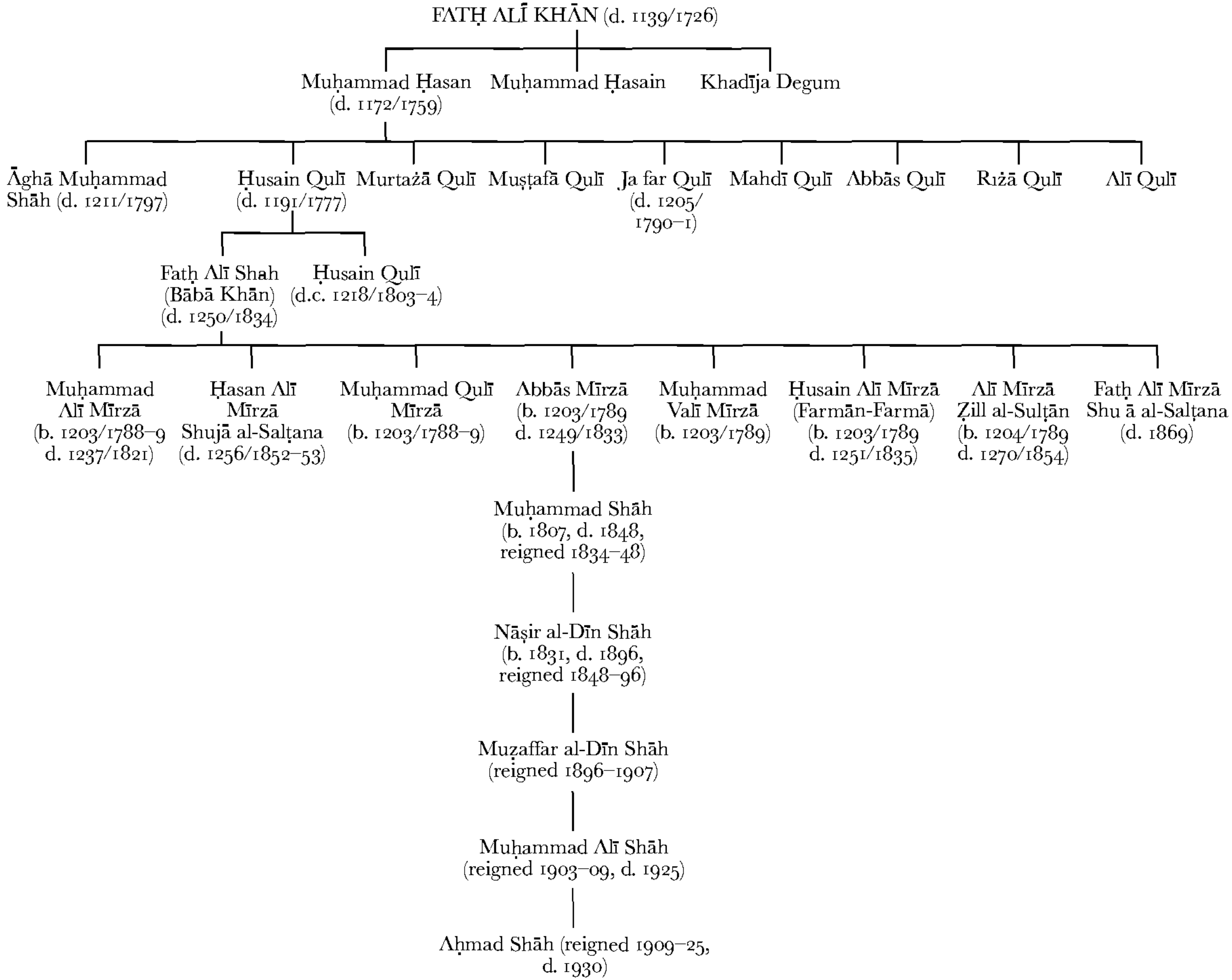
- Nadr Qulī Beg
  - Imam Qulī Beg
    - Nadr Qulī Beg (**Nādir Shāh**, 1698–1747)
      married:
      1. Elder daughter of Bābā Ali Beg of Abivard
         - Fāṭima Sulṭān Begum (daughter of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain) = Rižā Qulī (born 1719: Regent of Persia, 1738–40; put to death, 1747)
           - **Shāhrukh** (born, 1734; died, 1796; reg. 1748–1750, 1750–1796)
      2. Gauhar Shad (younger daughter of Bābā Ali Beg)
         - Naṣr-Allāh (put to death, 1747)
         - Imām Qulī (put to death, 1747)
      3. Rȧziyya Begum (daughter of Shāh Sulṭān Ḥusain. No issue recorded)
      4. Daughter of Abu l-Faiz of Bukhārā
    - Muḥammad Ibrāhīm Khān (killed, 1738)
      - Ali Qulī Khān (born, 1719/20; reigned as **Adil Shāh** 1747–48; put to death, 1749)
      - Muḥammad Ali Beg (known as Ibrāhīm Beg or Khān after his father's death; put to death, 1749)
  - Begtāsh Beg

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE ZANDS



1. Karīm Khān's mother, married Buḍaq on Ināq's death; Karīm, Iskandar and Zakī were thus half-brothers.
2. Each married a cousin: Shaikh Alī, Muḥammad Khān "Bi-kala," and one unknown.
3. First married the father of Alī Murād, then Ṣādiq; Ja far and Alī Murād were thus half-brothers.
4. Married Muḥammad Alī, Karīm Khān's third son.

GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF THE QĀJĀRS RELATED TO
ĀGHĀ MUḤAMMAD KHĀN*



*Sources: Zambaur, *Manuel de Généalogie et de Chronologie pour l'Histoire de l'Islam*, Bad Pyrmont, 1955, and *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, Vol. IV, p. 388. art. *Ḳādjār* by A. K. S. Lambton.

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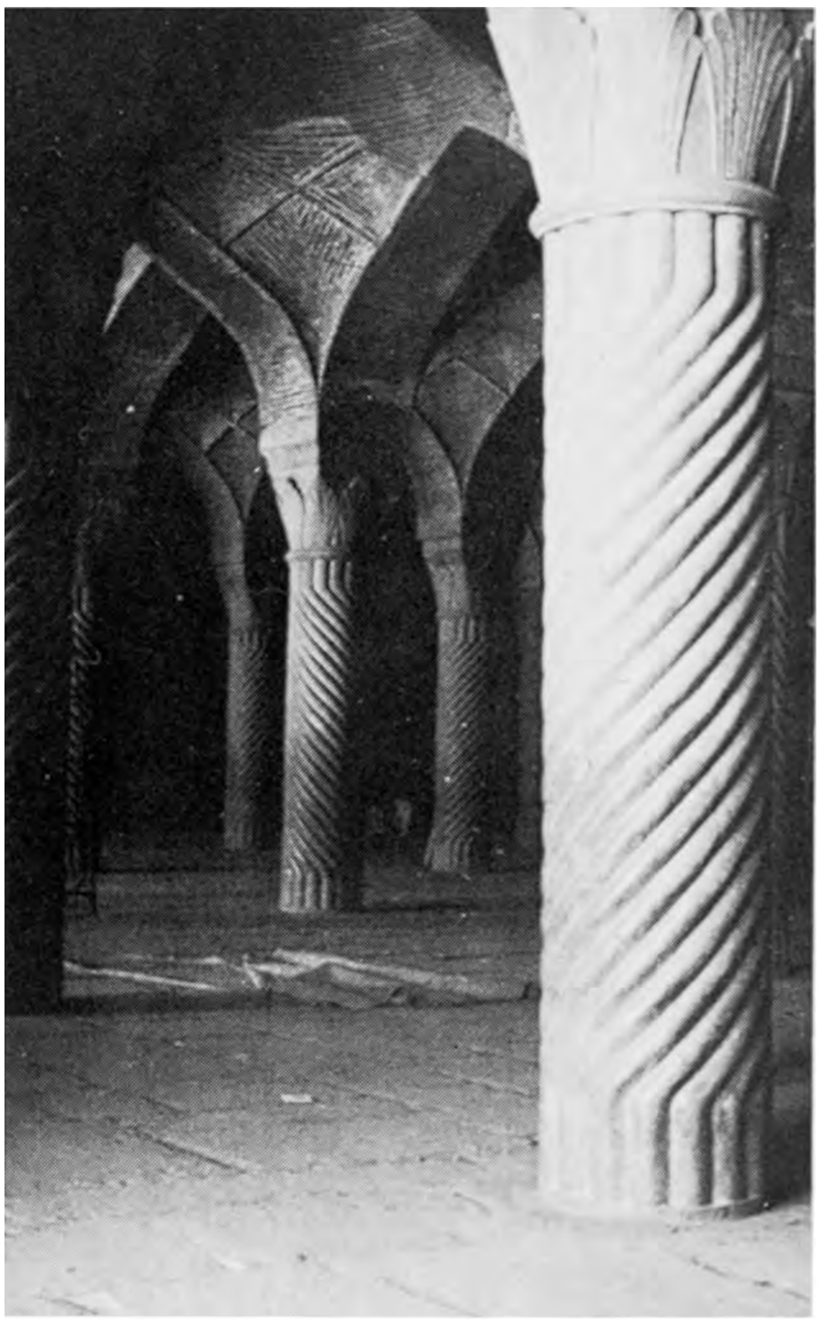
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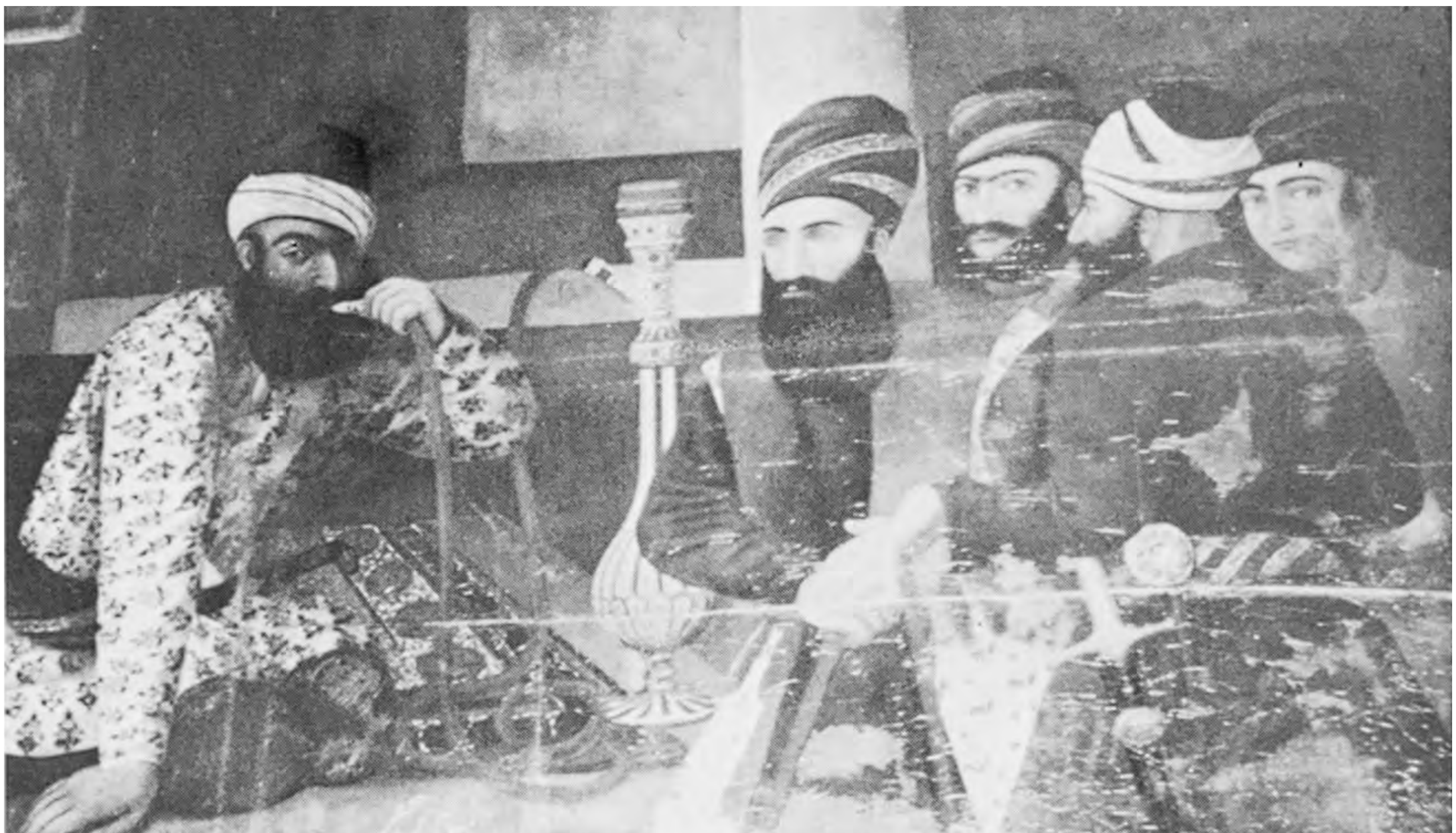
1 A contemporary portrait, said to be of Karīm Khān Zand.





2 (*a*) A corner of Karīm Khān's *arg* (citadel) in Shīrāz.

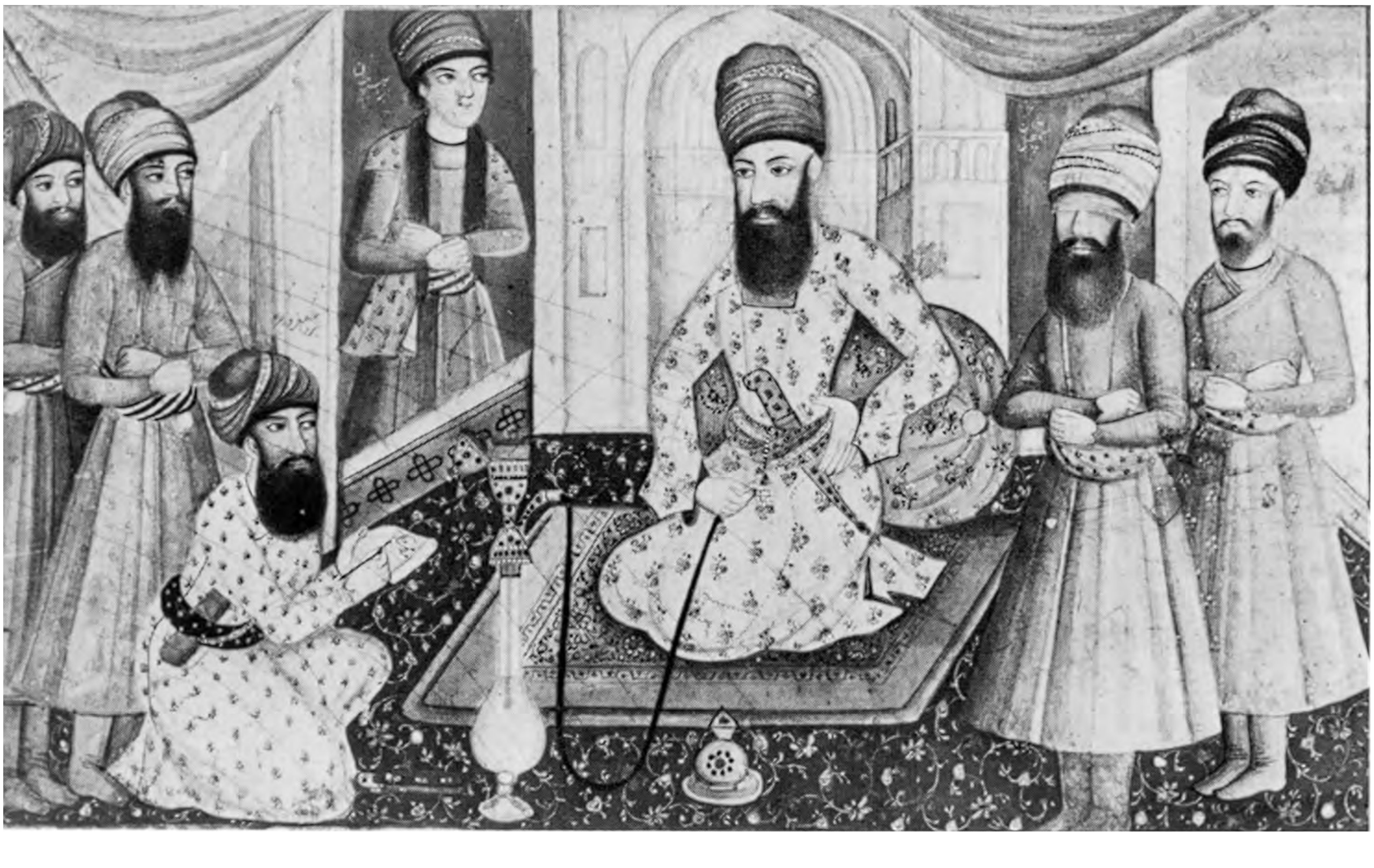
(*b*) Vakīl's mosque, Shīrāz. Interior of the *shabistōn*



(*c*) Karīm Khān with his kinsmen and courtiers. The blind figure in the centre is Shaikh ʿAlī Khān. Detail of a mural in the Pārs Museum, Shīrāz.



3 (*a*) Book-cover; Karīm Khān with his kinsmen and courtiers.



(*b*) Book-cover; Karīm Khān with his kinsmen and courtiers.



4 Majnūn visited by his father, by Muḥammad Zamān.



5 Portrait of Nādir Shāh.



6 Gold enamelled dish, by Muḥammad Jaʿfar.



7 Āghā Muḥammad Khān Qājār seated, with his minister Ḥājjī Ibrahīm standing before him.



8 Pen-box by Ṣādiq.
Pen-box by Najaf.
Spectacles-case by Muḥammad Ismaʿīl.
Pen-box by Aḥmad.
Pen-box by Muṣṭafā.



9 Portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, by Mīrzā Bābā.



10 Mirror-case by Ashraf, outer cover.



11 Mirror-case by Ashraf, inner cover.



12 Portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, by Mīrzā Bābā.



13 (*a*) Rustam and the White Demon,
by Mīrzā Bābā and Muḥammad Bāqir.



(*b*) Mirror-case, by Mīrzā Bābā.



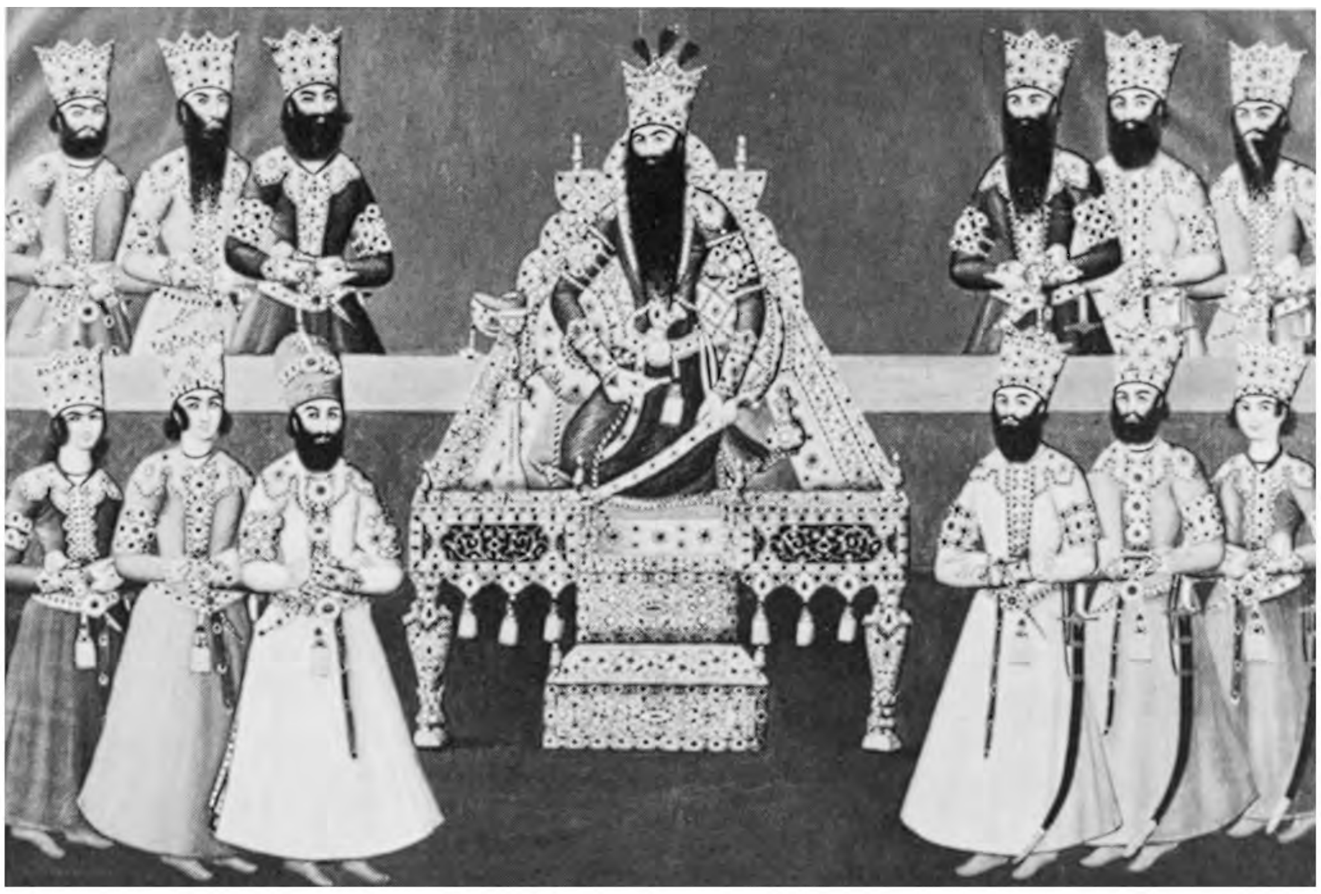
14 (*a*) Portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, by Mihr ʿAlī.



(*b*) Portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, by Mihr ʿAlī.



15 Portrait of ʿAbbās Mīrzā, probably by Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān.







16, 17 Copy of Nigāristān fresco, by ʿAbd-Allāh Khān.









18 Portrait of a girl musician by Abuʾl-Qāsim.



19 Portrait of a girl, by Muḥammad Ḥasan Khān.



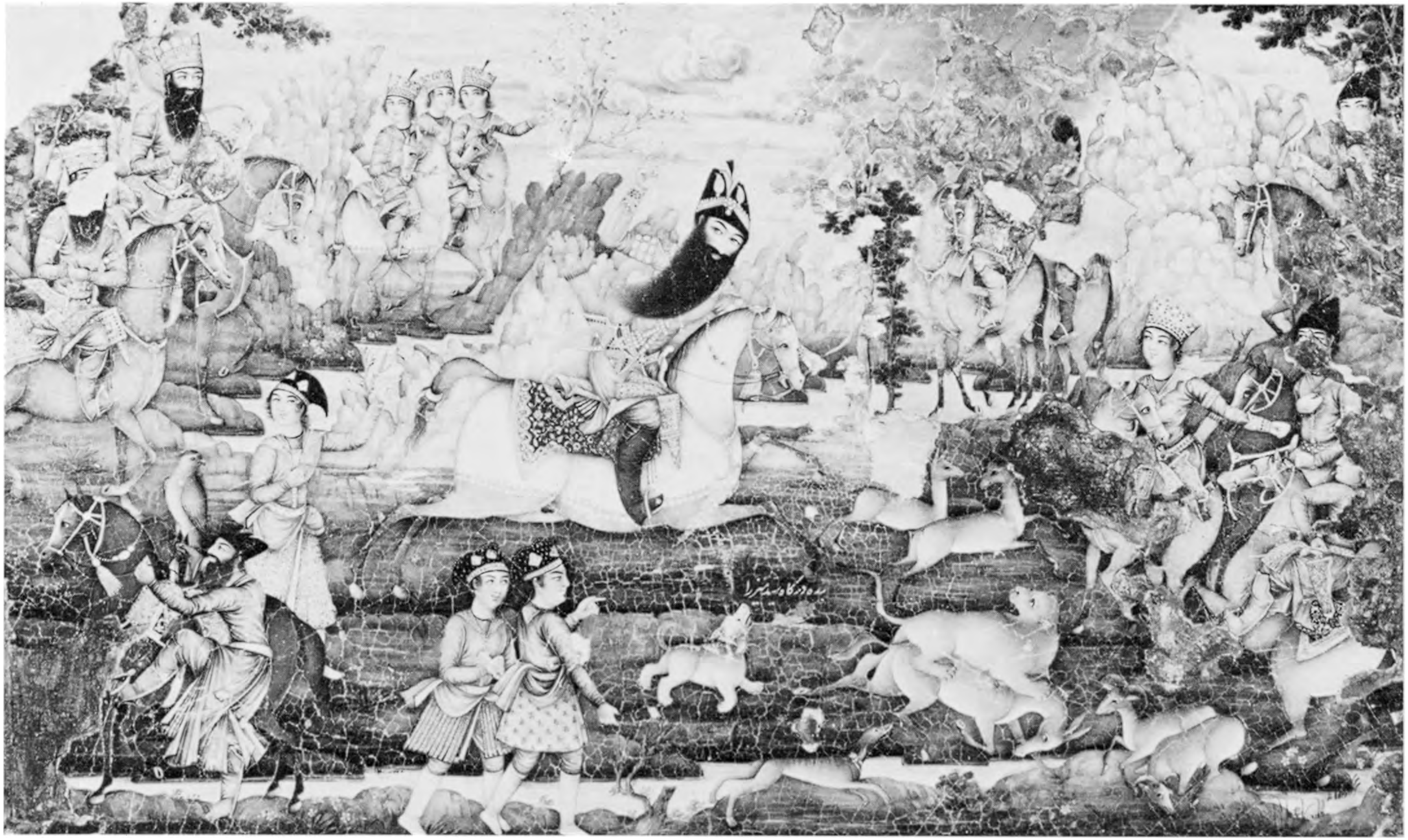
20 Portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, by Aḥmad.



21 (*a*) Portrait of a girl, by Muḥammad.



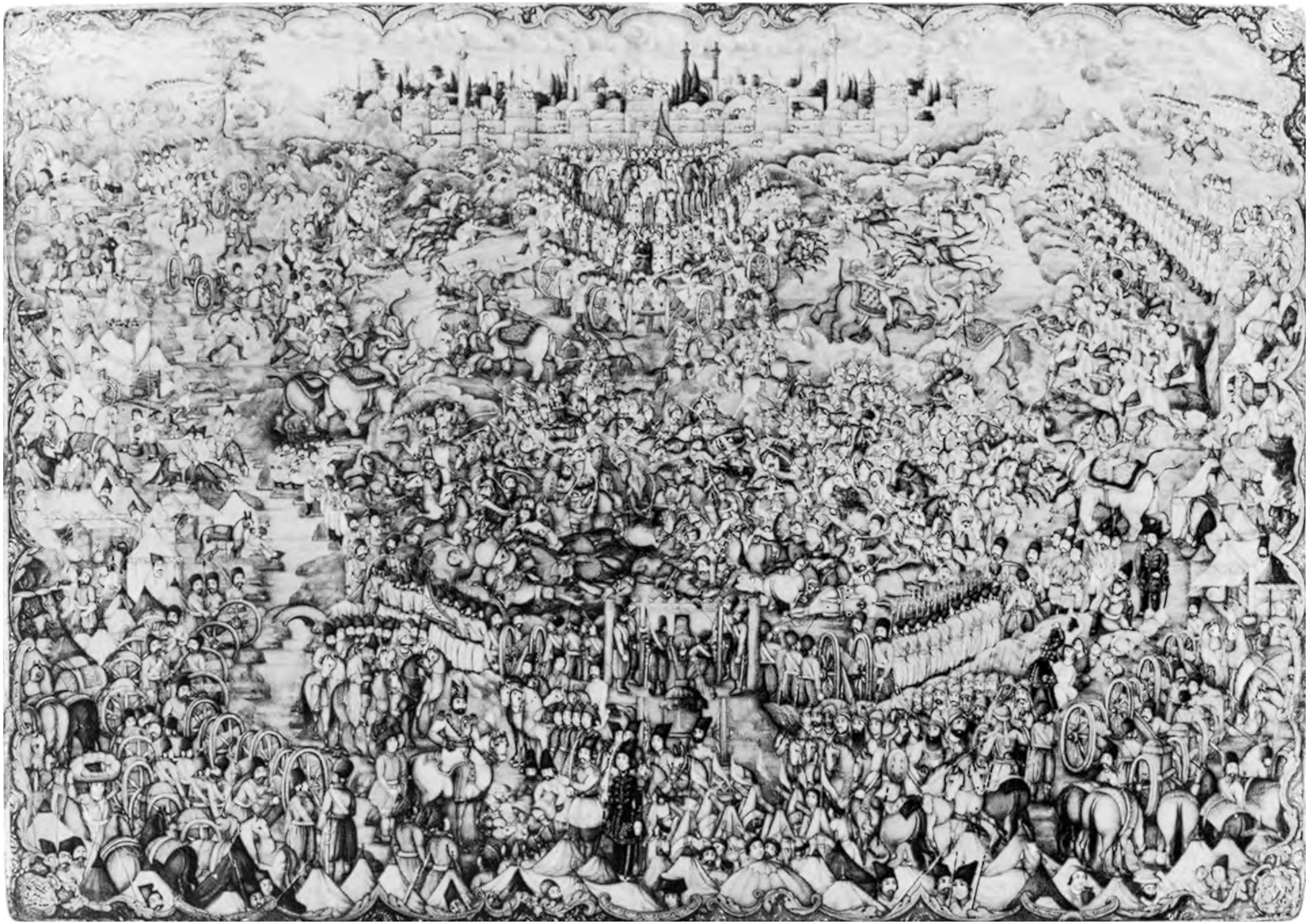
(*b*) The court of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, by Sayyid Mīrzā.



22 Book-cover: Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh hunting, by Sayyid Mīrzā.



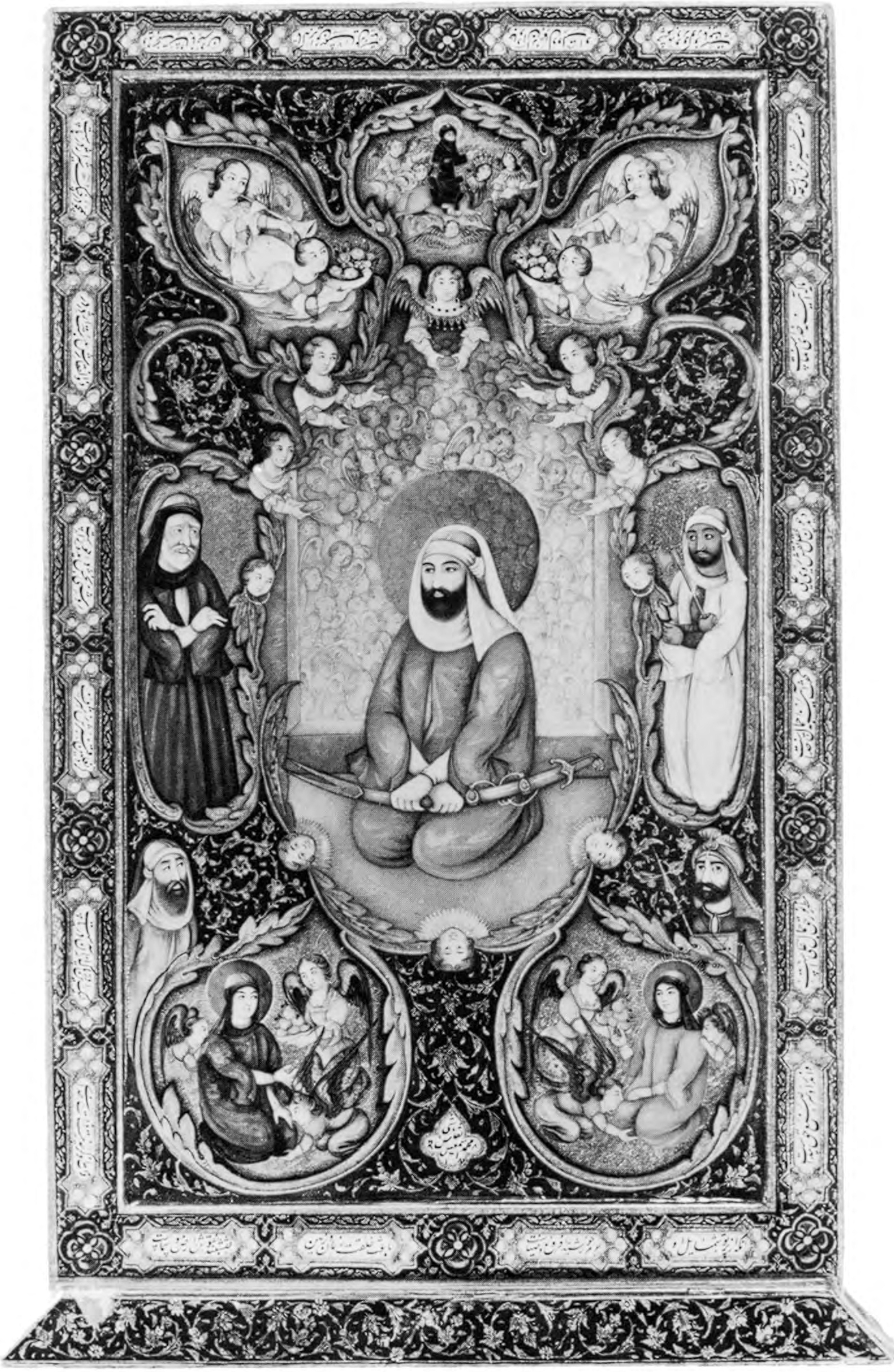
23 Book-cover: Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh hunting, by Muḥammad Bāqir.



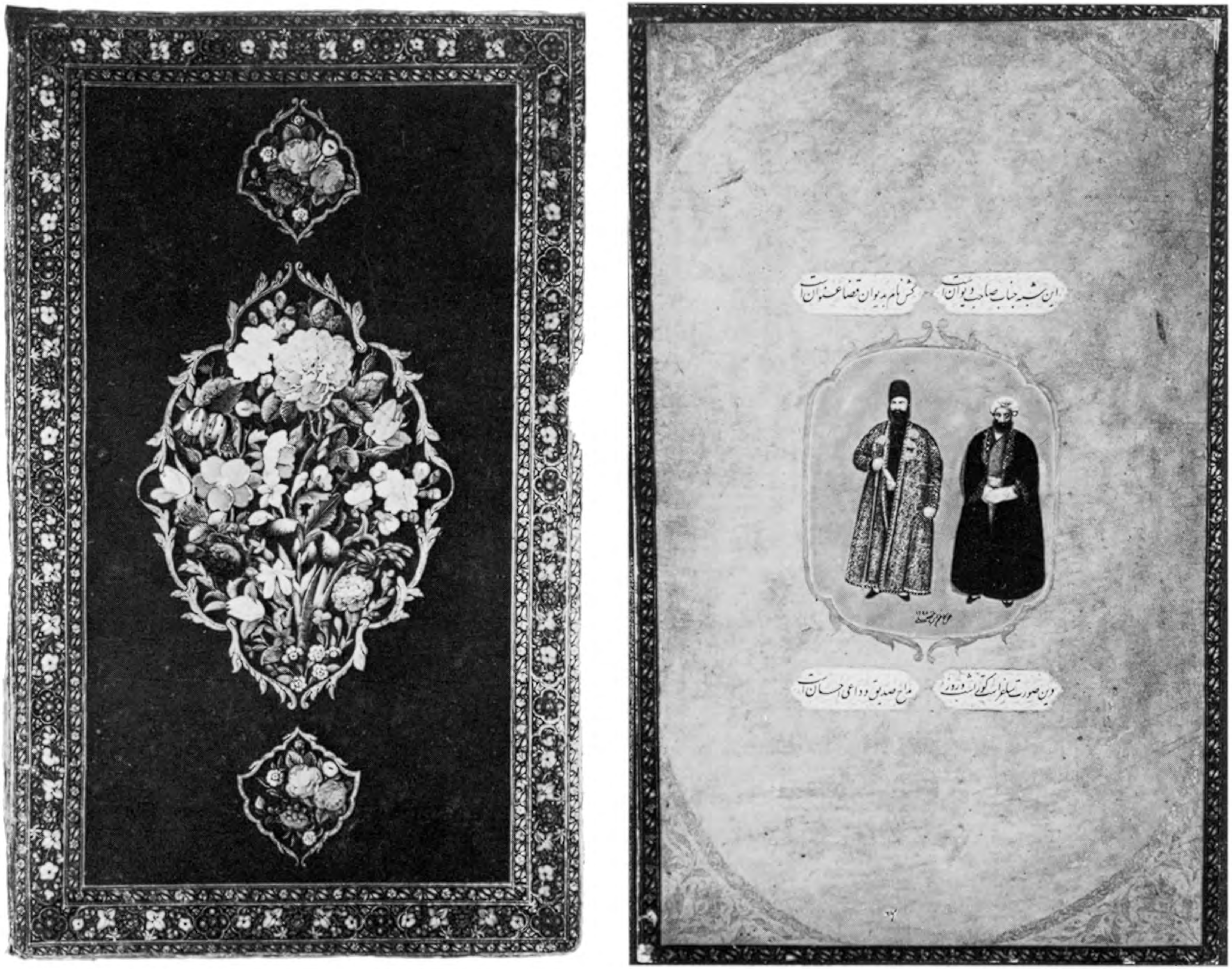
24 Lid of casket: the siege of Herat, by Muḥammad Ismaʿīl.



25 Mirror-case: meeting of Prince Nāṣir al-Dīn and the Tsar at Erivan, by Muḥammad Ismaʿīl.



26 Mirror-case: Hażrat ʿAlī, by Muḥammad Ismaʿīl.



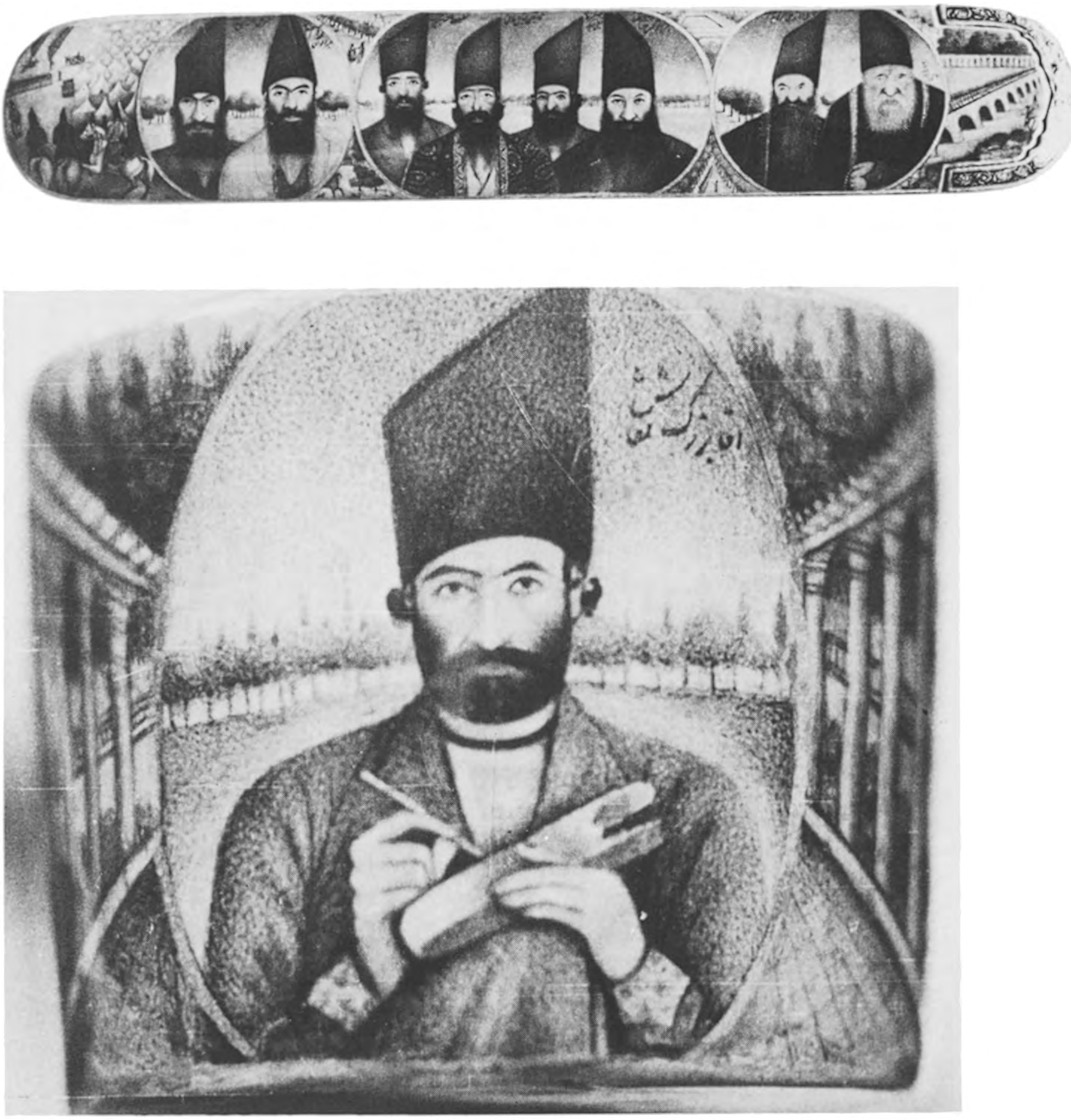
27 Book-cover; floral design and
portraits, by Muḥammad Kāẓim.



28 (*a*),(*b*) Gold enamelled *qalyān*-bowl,
by Muḥammad Kāẓim.



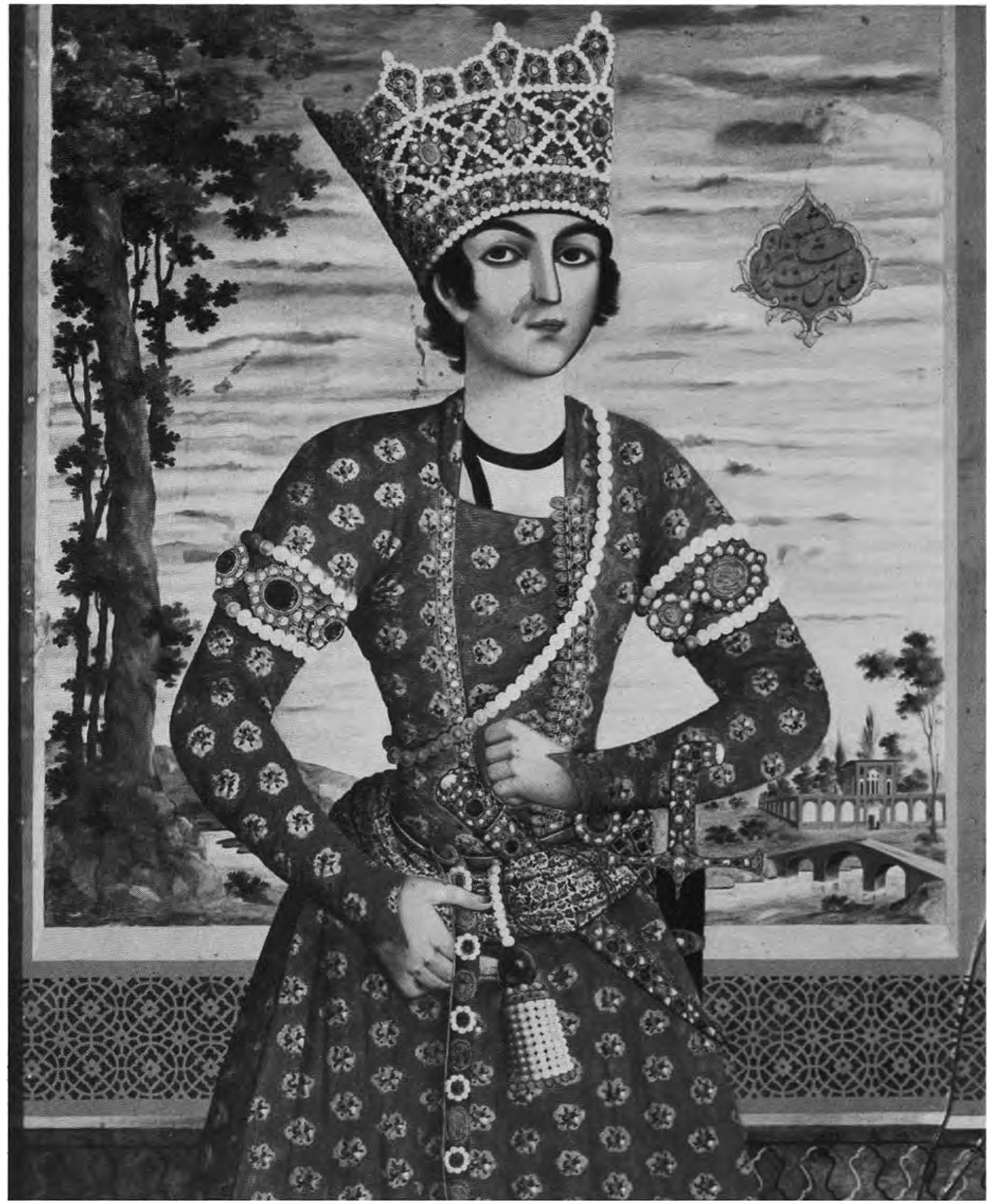
(*c*),(*d*) Pen-box, by Aḥmad.



29 Pen-box, by Āqā Buzurg Shīrāzī.



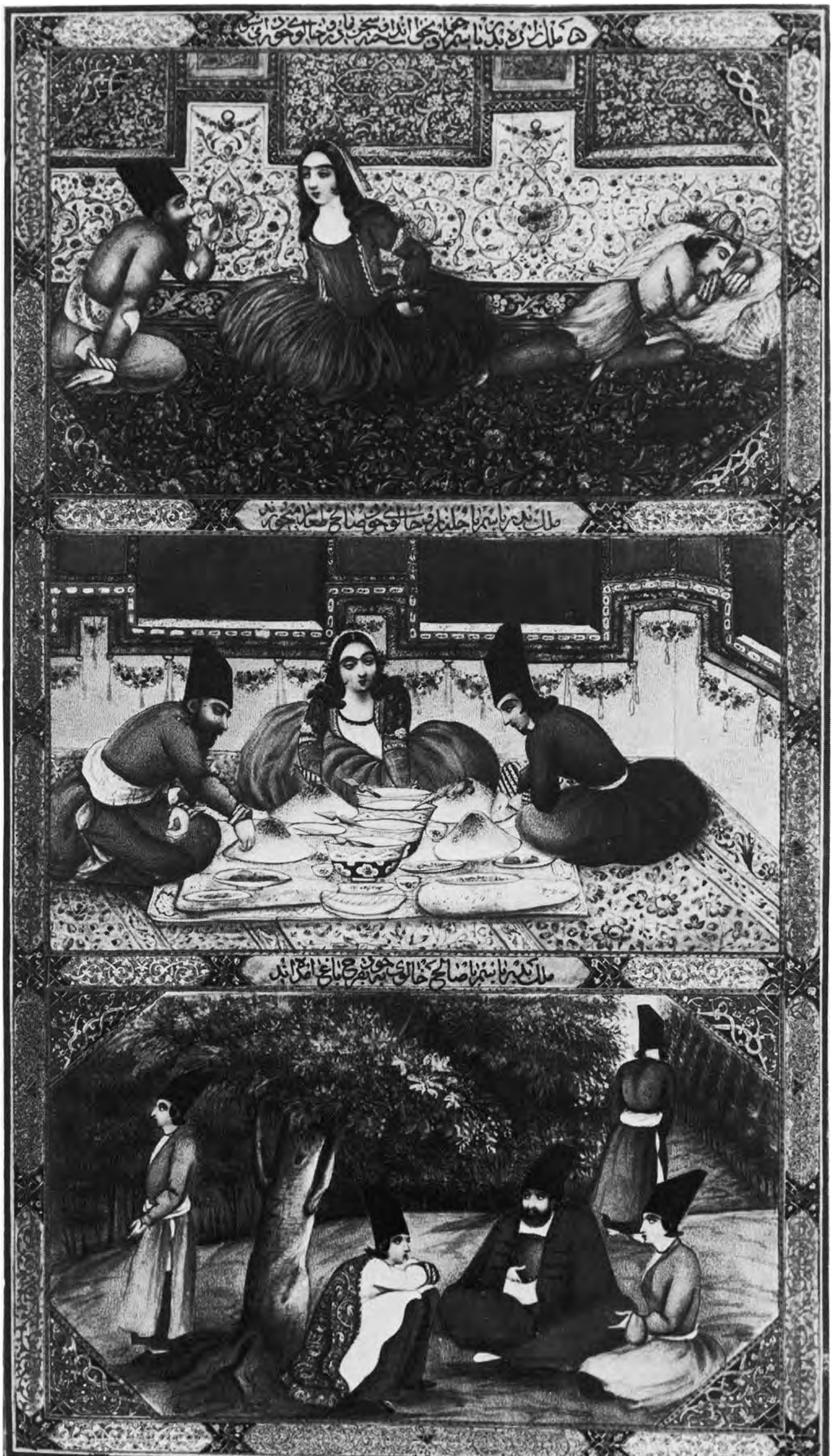
30 (*a*) Portrait of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh,
probably by Muḥammad Ḥasan Afshār.



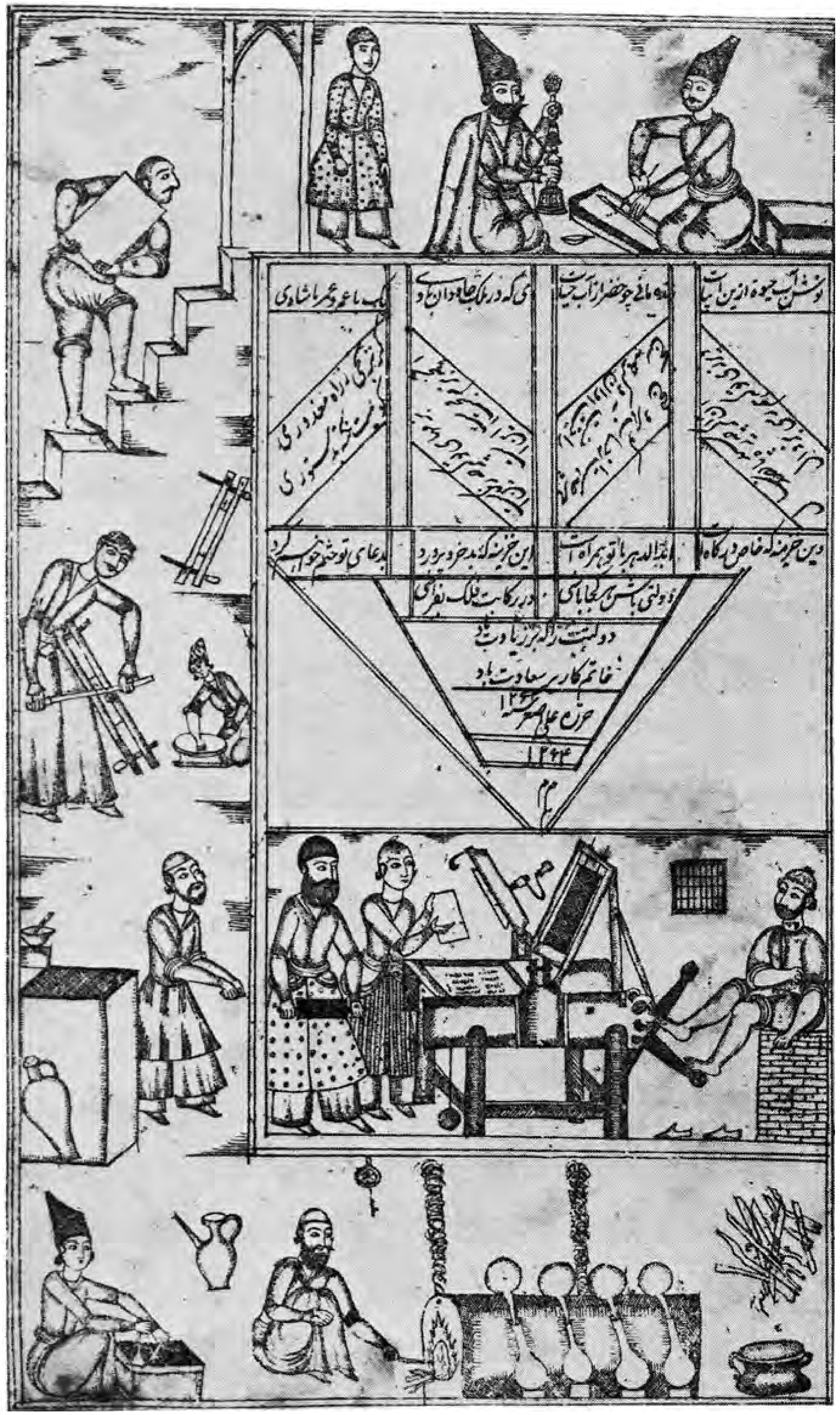
(*b*) Églomisé portrait of ʿAbbās Mīrzā.



31 Young prince and entourage, by Abuʾl-Ḥasan Ghaffārī.



32 Illustrations to the Arabian Nights, by Abuʾl-Ḥasan Ghaffārī.



33 (*a*) Processes of lithography (lithograph), by ʿAlī Qulī Khūyī.



(*b*) Lithograph portrait of Ḥājjī Mīrzā Ḥusain Khān, by Abuʾl-Ḥasan Ghaffārī.



34 (*a*) Zhāl wooing Rūdāba, by Luṭf ʿAlī Khān.



(*b*) Hand holding a spray of roses, by Luṭf ʿAlī Khān.



35 (*a*) Carnations, by Muḥammad Hādī.



(*b*) Reclining girl, by Āqā'ī Iṣfahānī.



36 (*a*) Āqā Raḥīm the turner of Iṣfahān.



(*b*) Sketch of girl dancer and musician, by Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh.



37 The young dervish Nūr ʿAlī Shāh, by Ismaʿīl Jalāʾir.



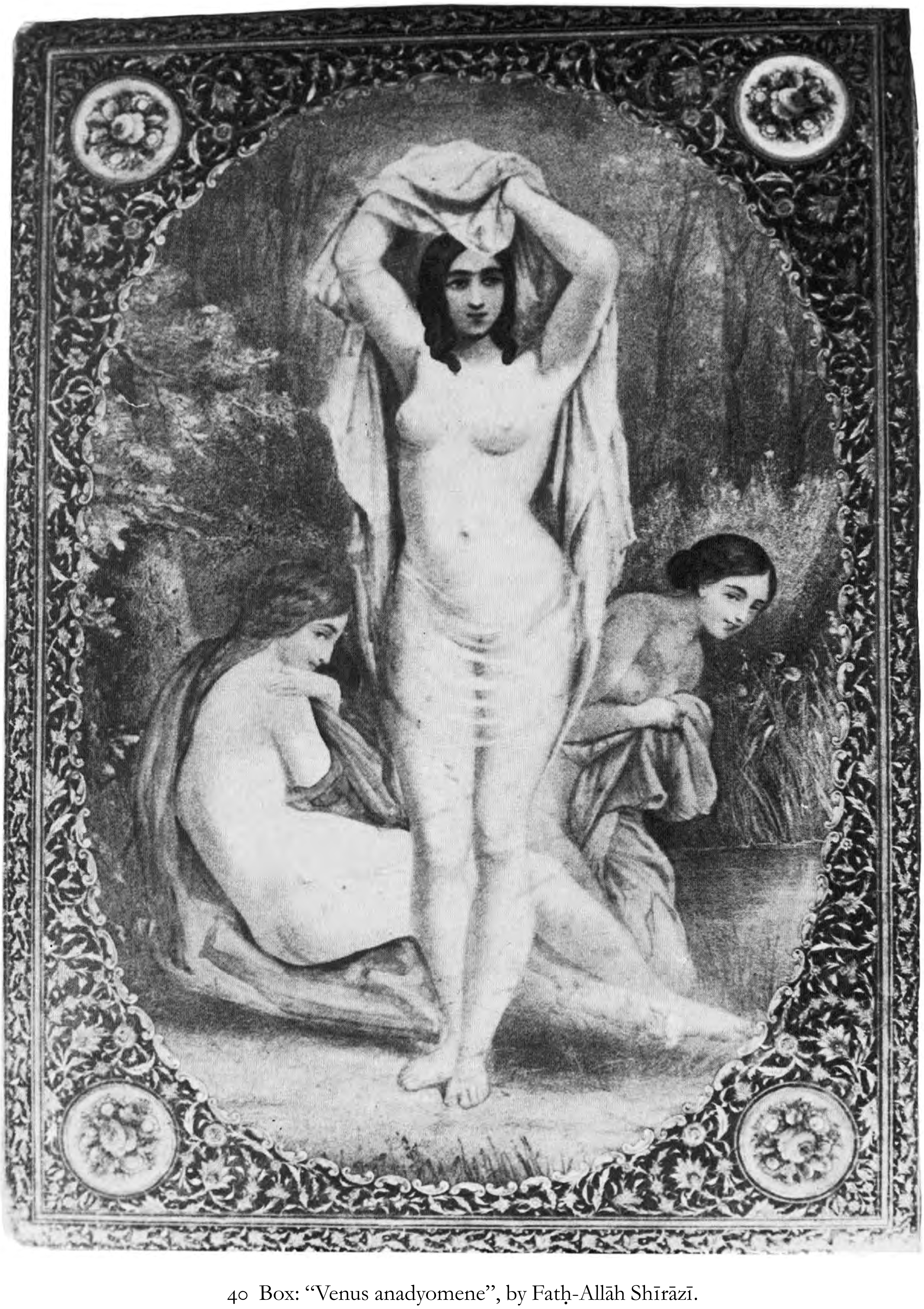


38 (*a*) Portrait of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh.

(*b*) Portrait of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh, by Muḥammad Ghaffārī, Kamāl al-Mulk.



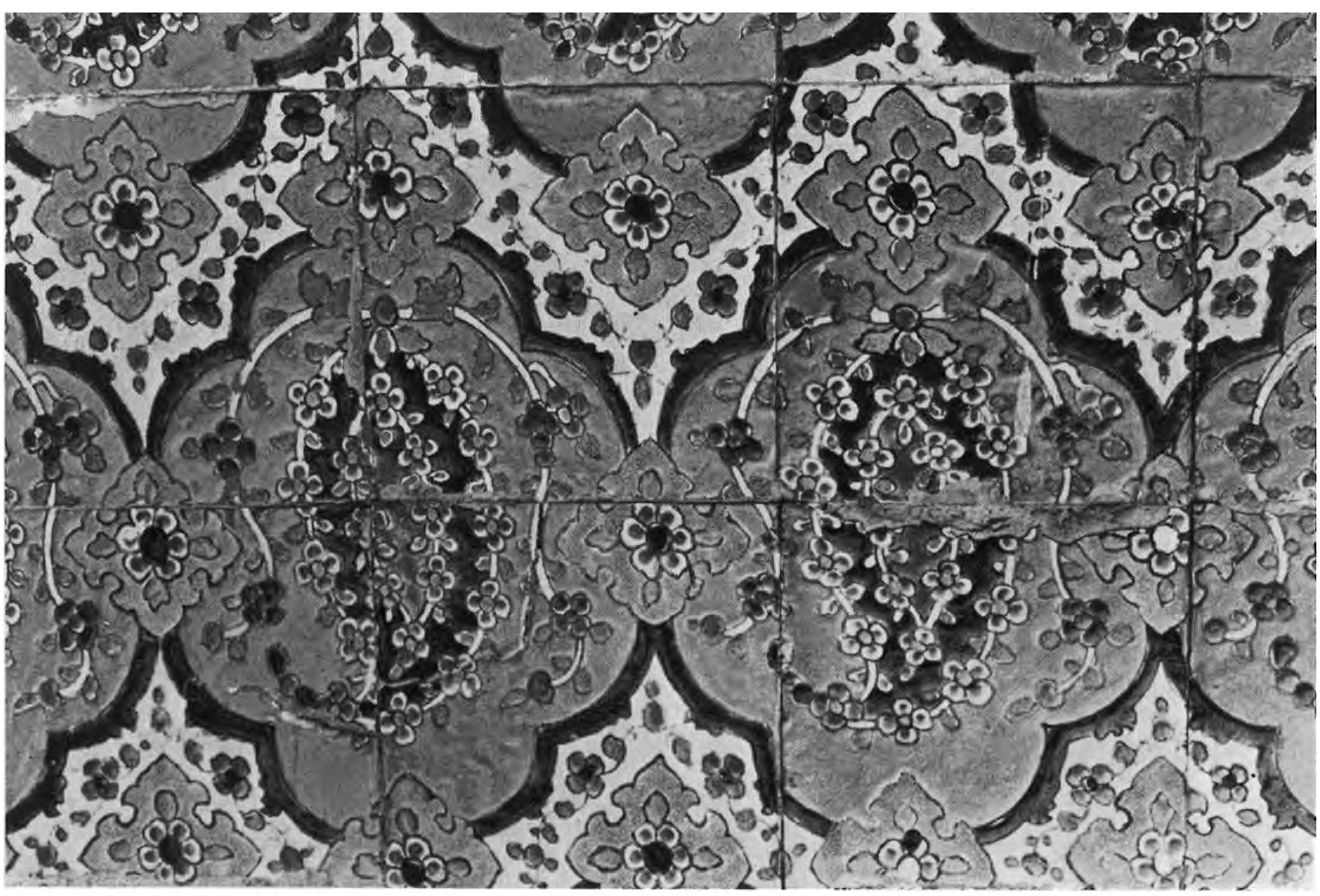
39 Two men seated by candle-light, by Mīrzā Maḥmūd Khān, Malik al-Shuʿarā.



40 Box: “Venus anadyomene”, by Fatḥ-Allāh Shīrāzī.



41 (*a*) Qazvīn, gate leading out of the city to the Tehran road, late 19th century.



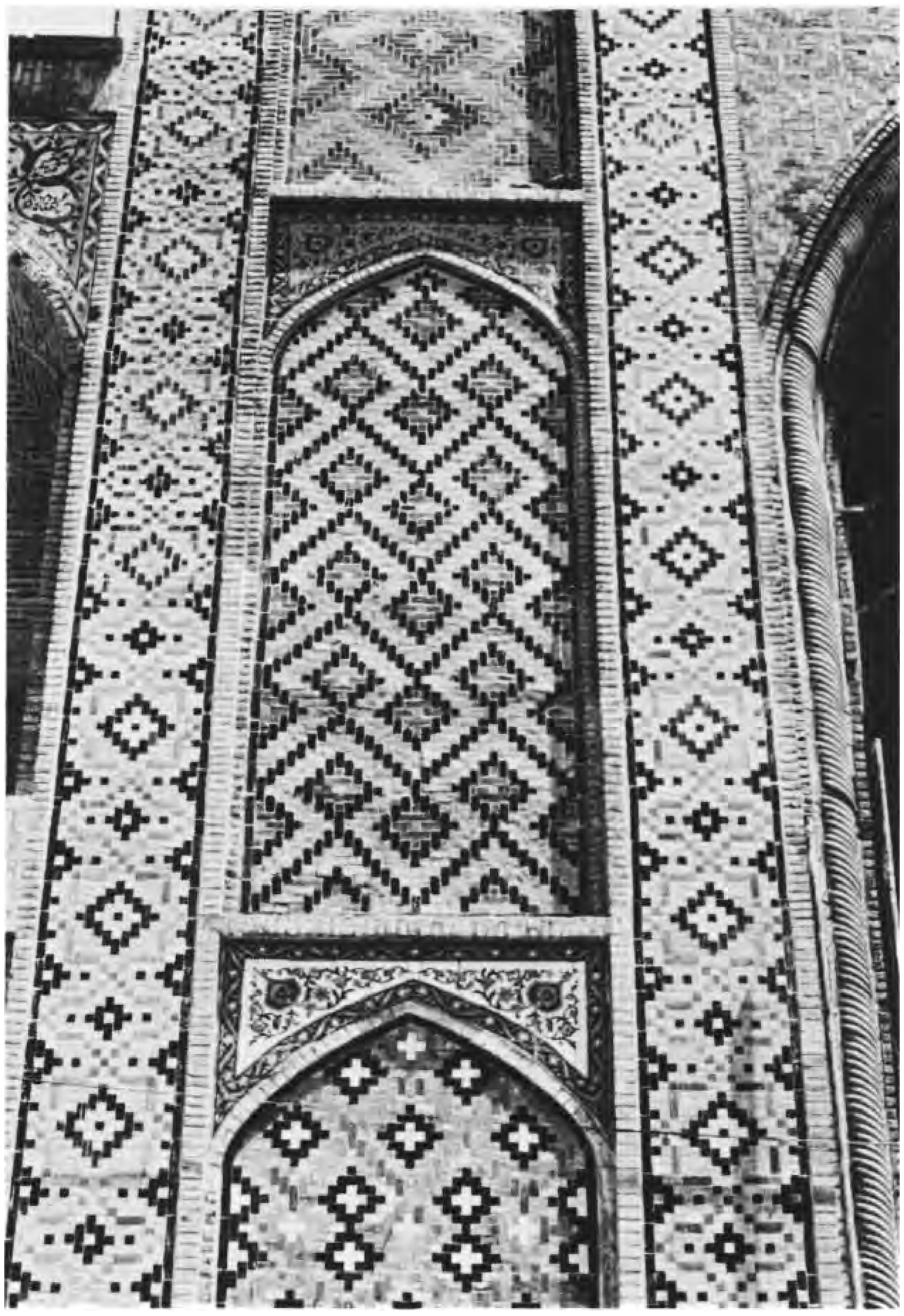
(*b*) Simnān, Masjid-i Shāh, cuerda seca tiles in repeating floral pattern.



42 Kirmānshāh, Takya-yi Muʿāvin al-Mulk, 1920, cuerda seca tile portrait of "the late Shaikh Aḥmad".



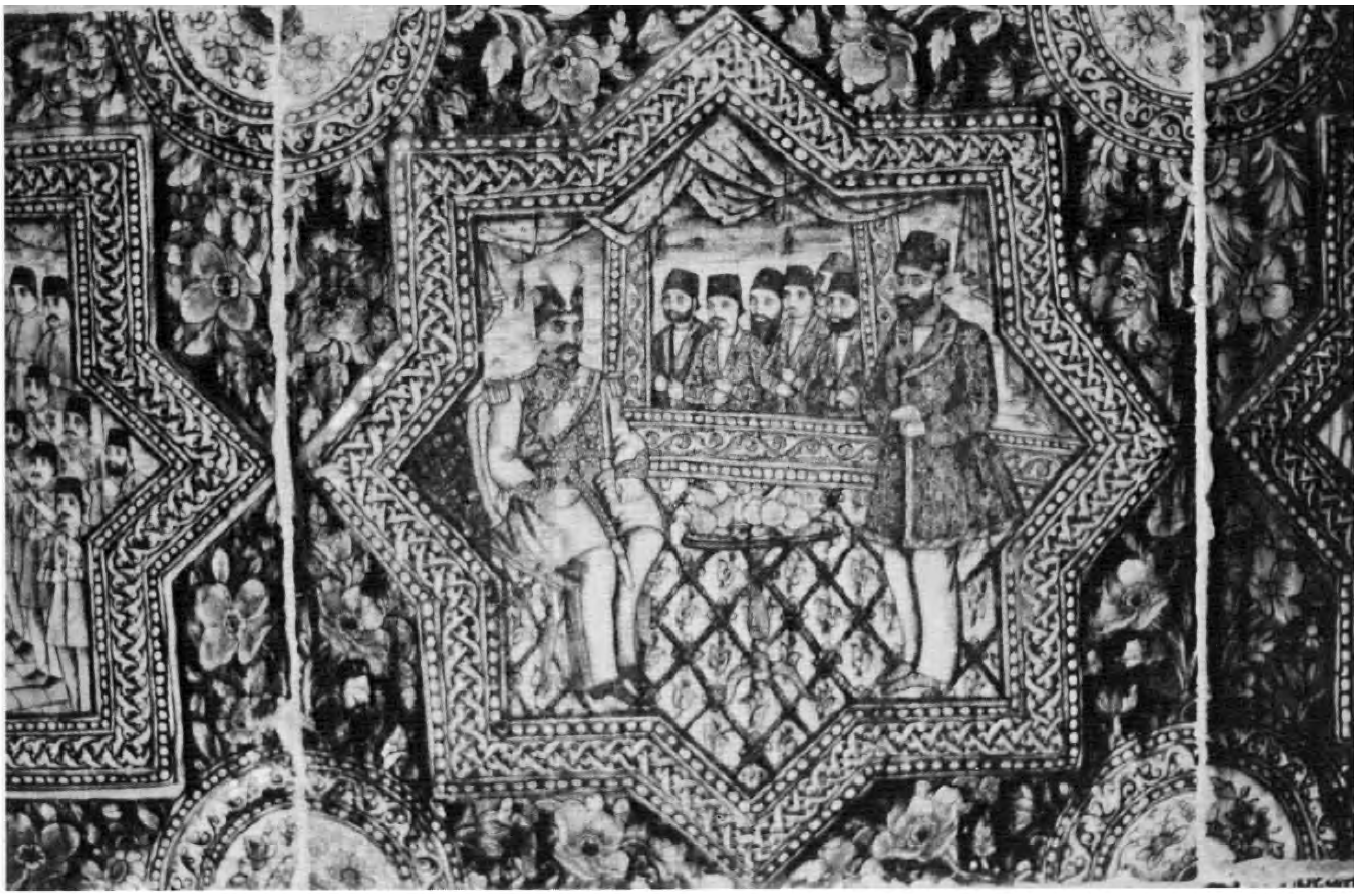
43 (*a*) Tehran, Darvāza-yi Bāgh-i Millī, c. 1922, cuerda seca tile portrait of a soldier in Cossack uniform.



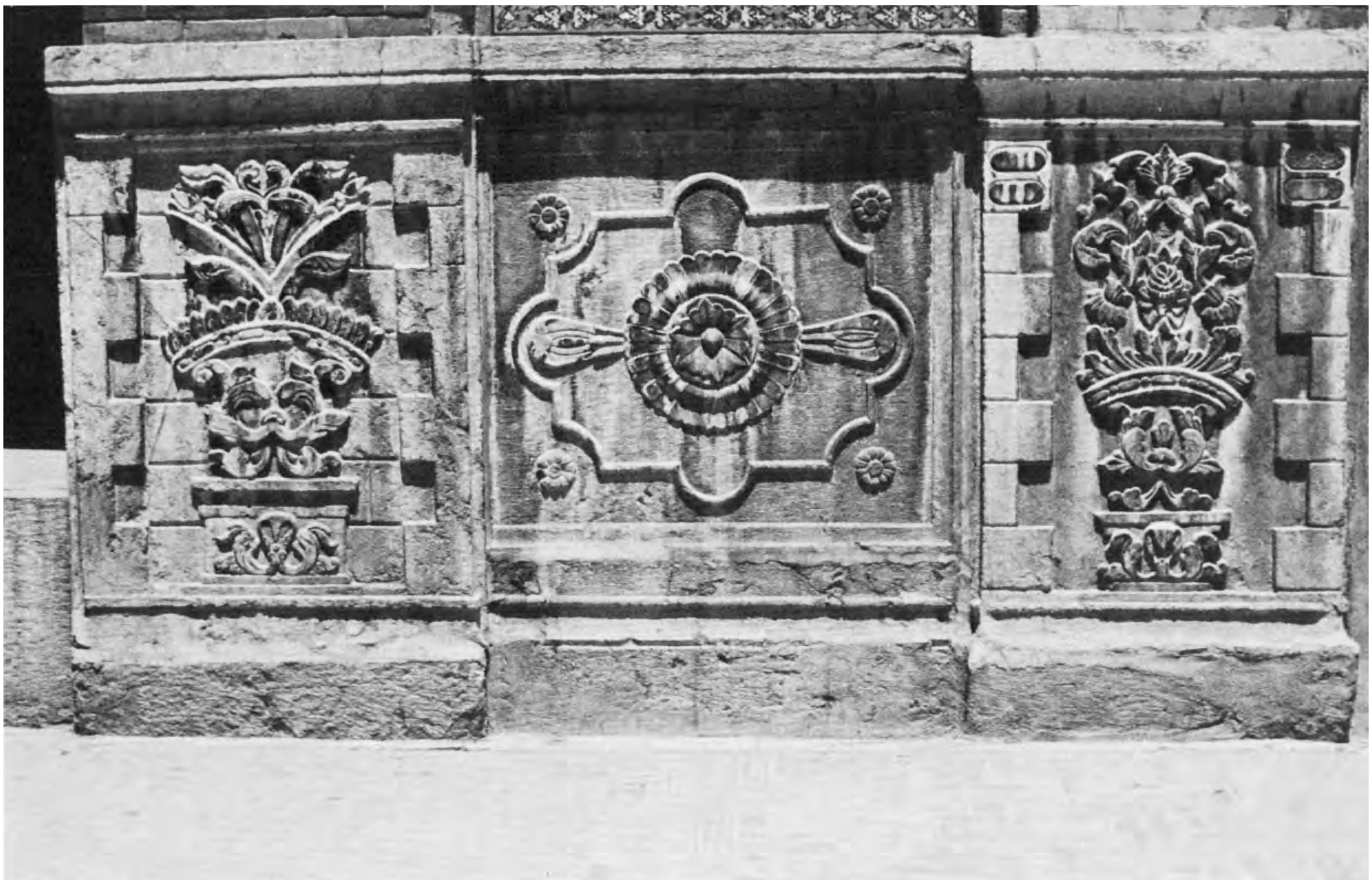
(*b*) Qazvīn, Masjid-i Shāh, mosaic tilework.



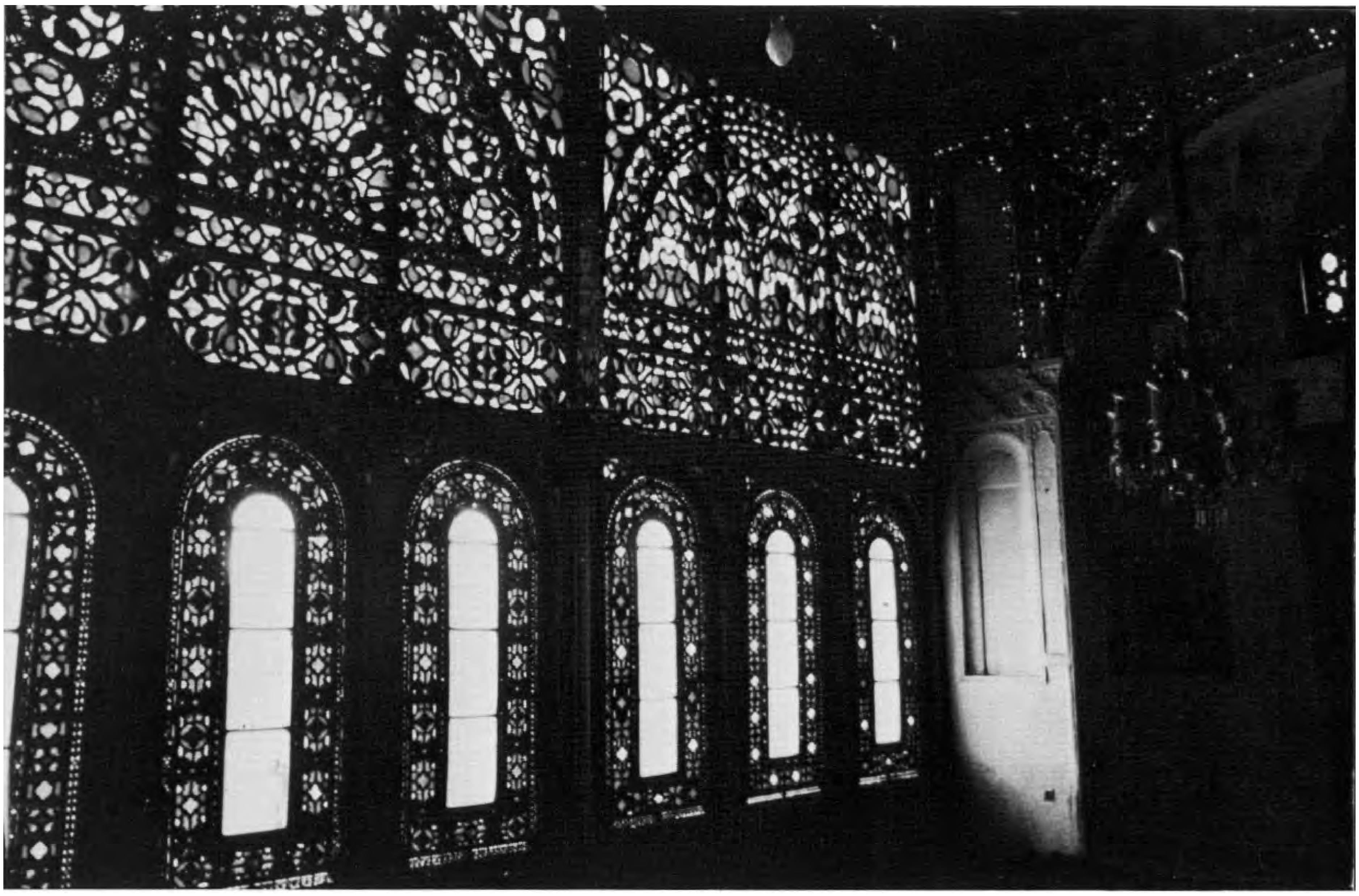
(*c*) Environs of Tehran, Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's summer palace of Salṭanatābād, 1888. Underglaze painted tile portrait of Persian woman in outdoor dress.



44 (*a*) Tehran. Gulistān Palace vestibule, underglaze painted tile of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh listening to a piano recital.



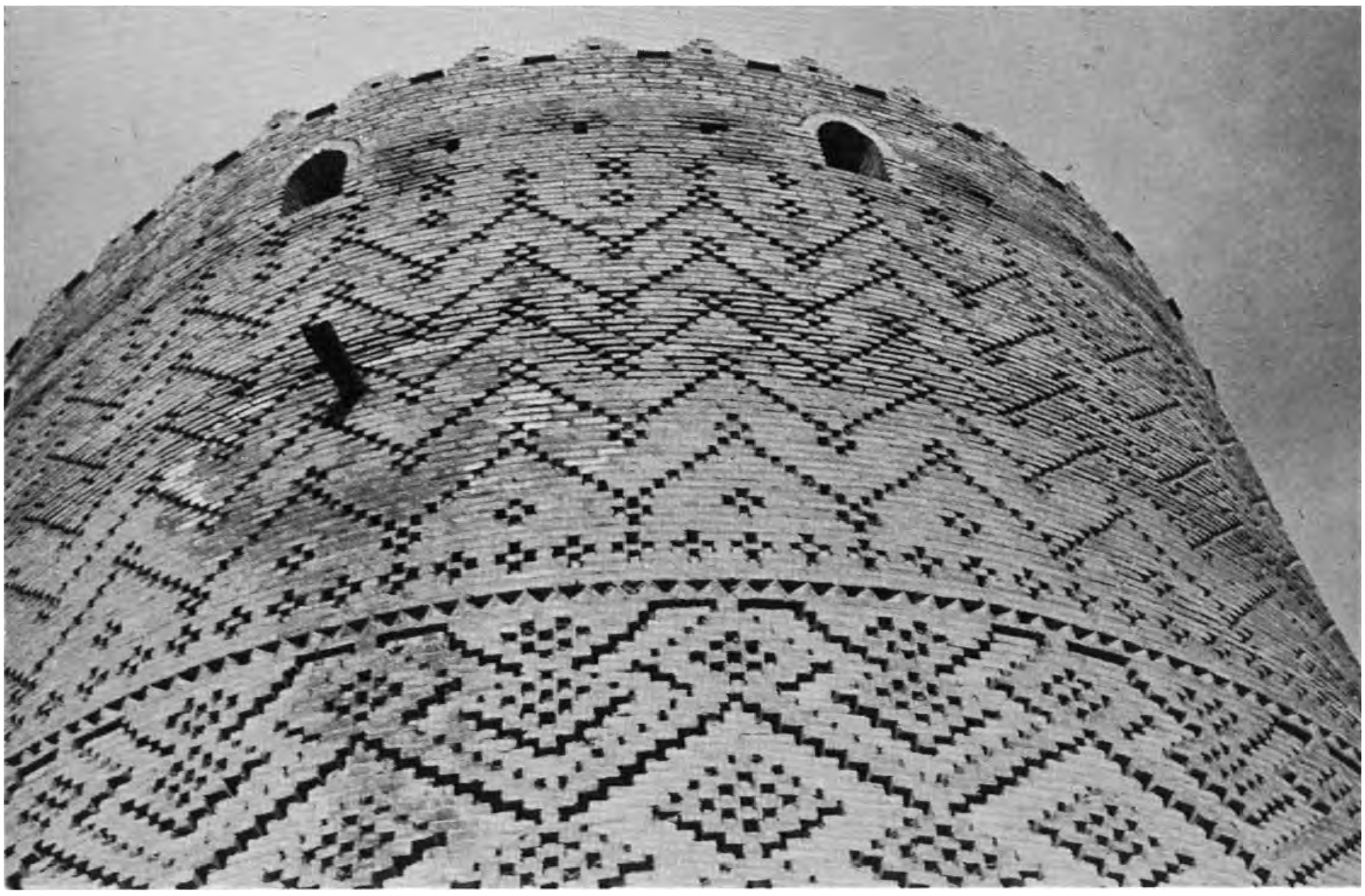
(*b*) Tehran, Masjid-i Sipahsālār, 1880-90. Stone dado carved with floral bouquet motifs.



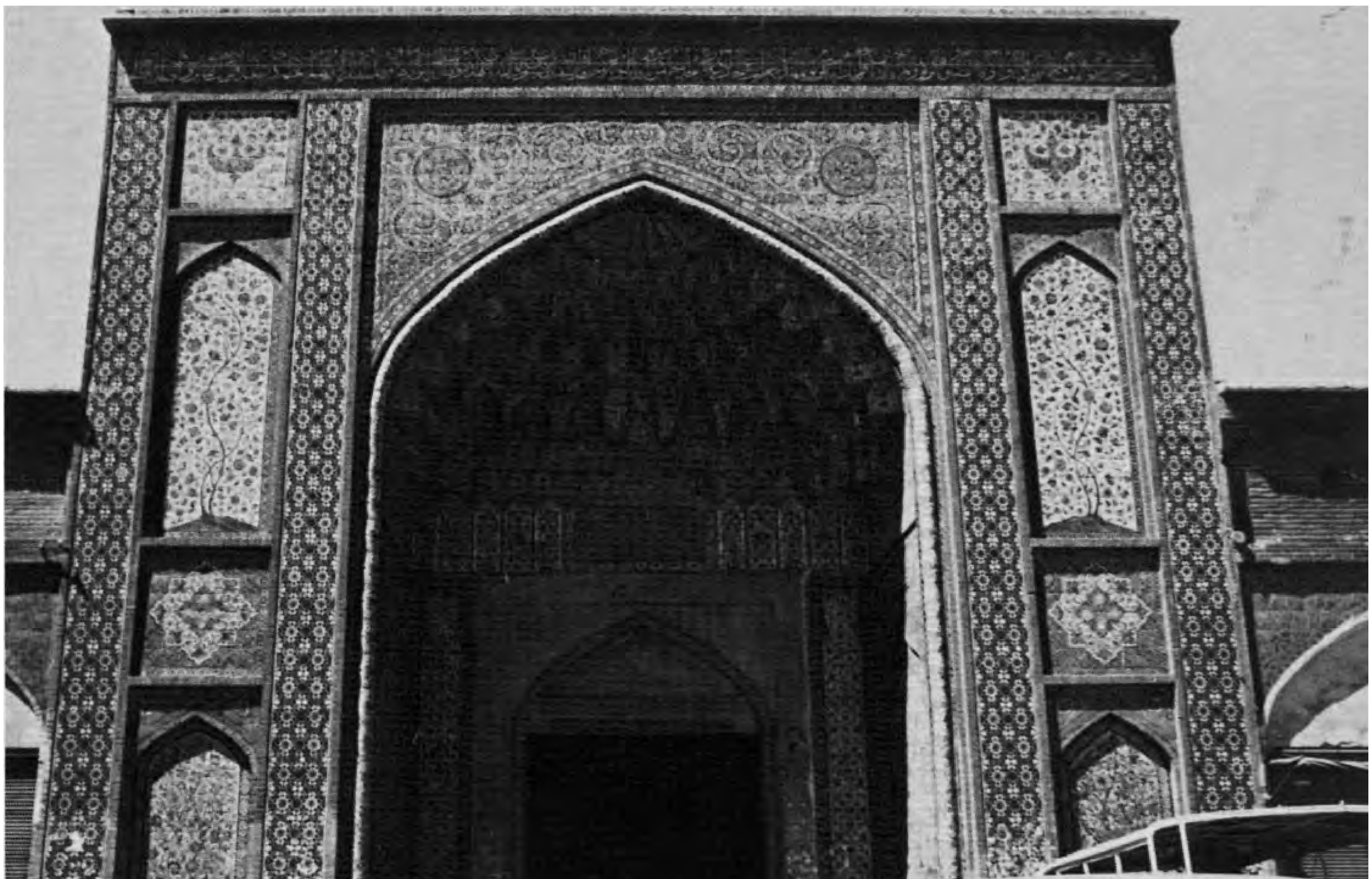
45 (*a*) Qazvīn, Ḥusainiyya-yi Amīnī, late 19th century. Windows with stained glass fanlights.



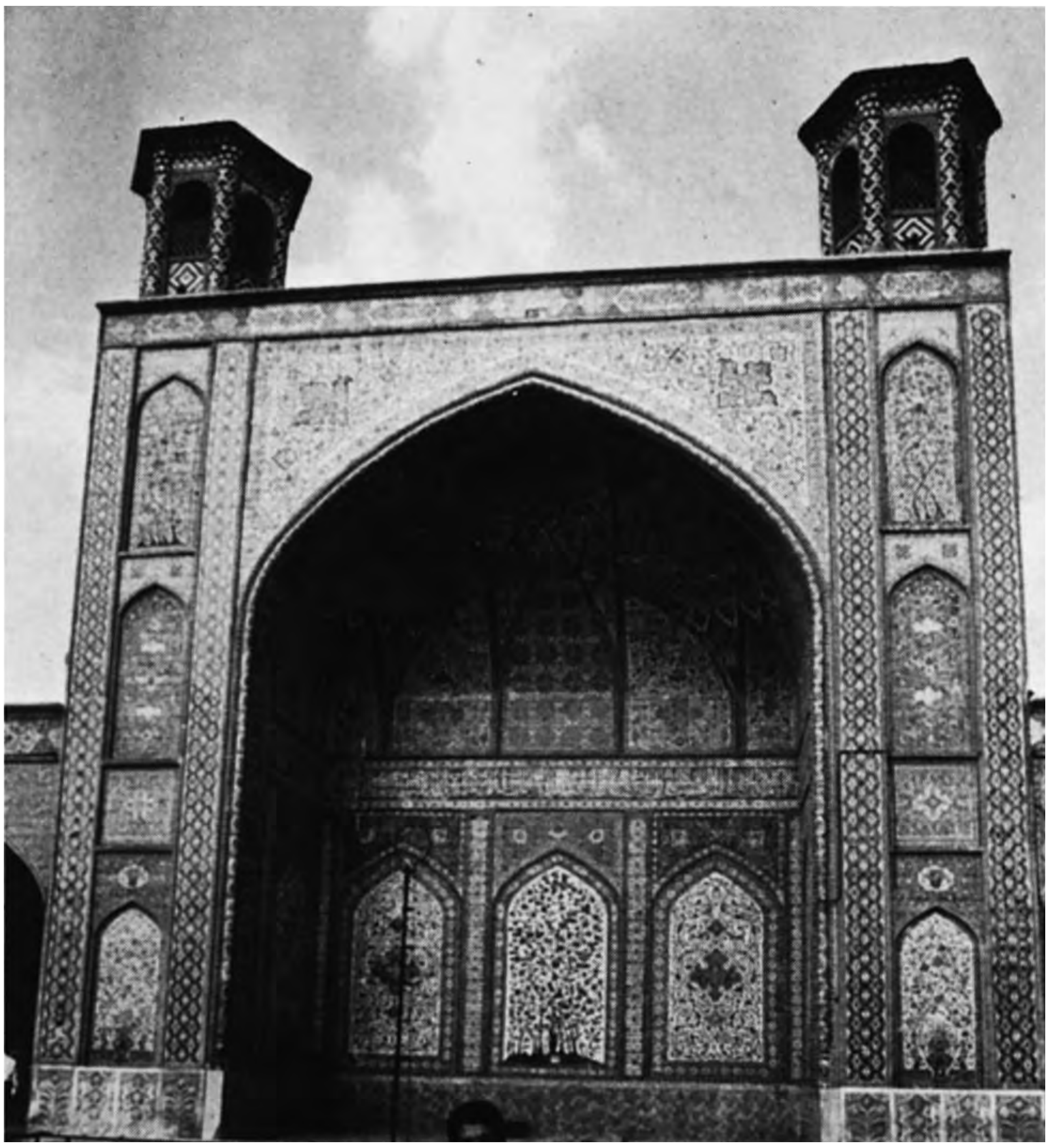
(*b*) Tehran, Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's summer palace at Bāgh-i Firdaus, late 19th century. Carved stucco ceiling detail.



46 (*a*) Shīrāz, Karīm Khān Zand's citadel, mid-18th century. Corner tower.
Detail of pl. 2 (*a*).



(*b*) Shīrāz, Masjid-i Vakīl, 1766. Entrance.



47 (*a*) Shīrāz, Masjid-i Vakīl, 1766. North *aivān*.



(*b*) Shīrāz, Karīm Khān Zand's Kulāh-i Farangī, mid-18th century.



48 (*a*) Qazvīn, Masjid-i Shāh, 1806. Entrance.



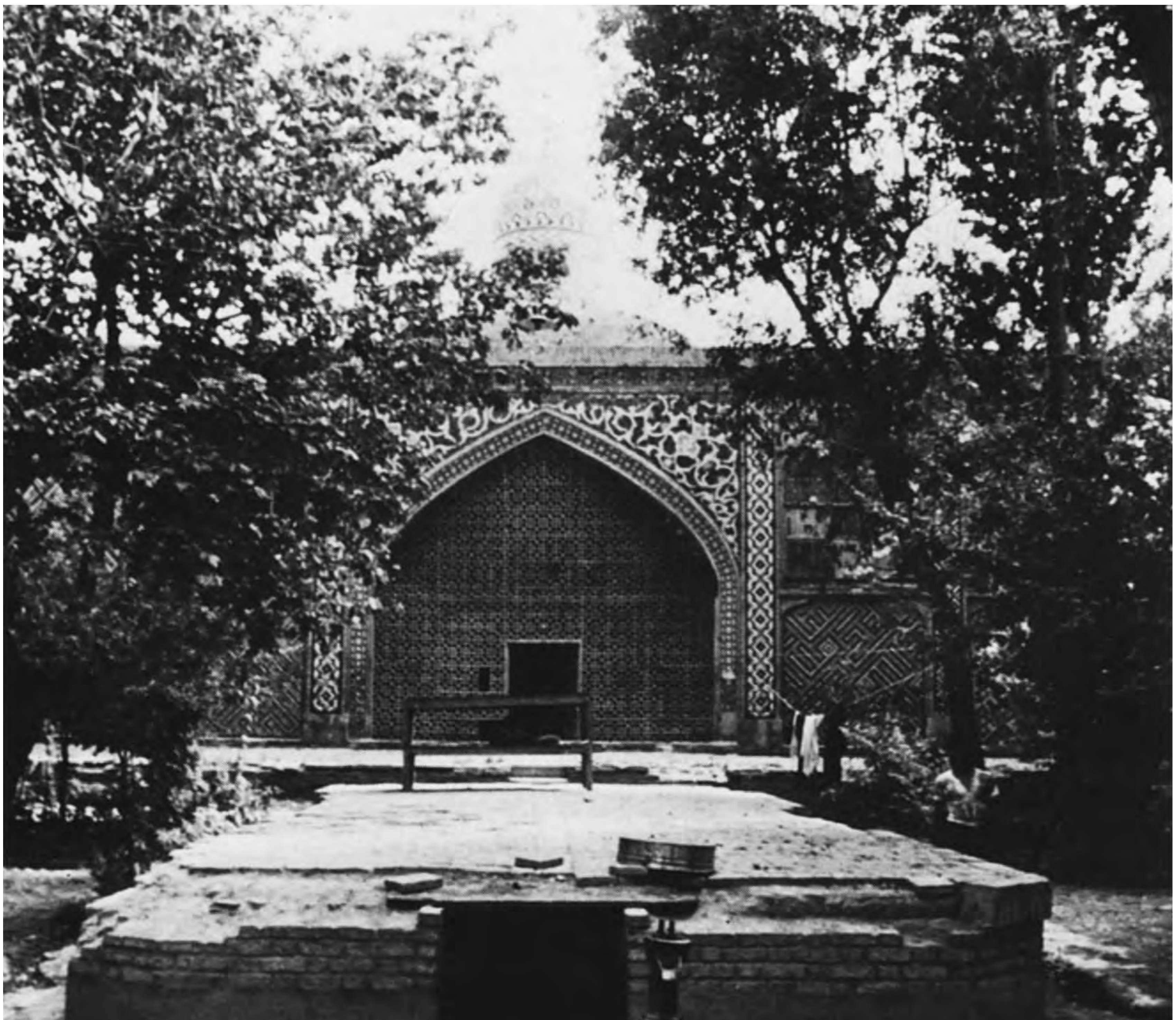
(*b*) Tehran, Masjid-i Shāh, 1808–13. North *aivān*.



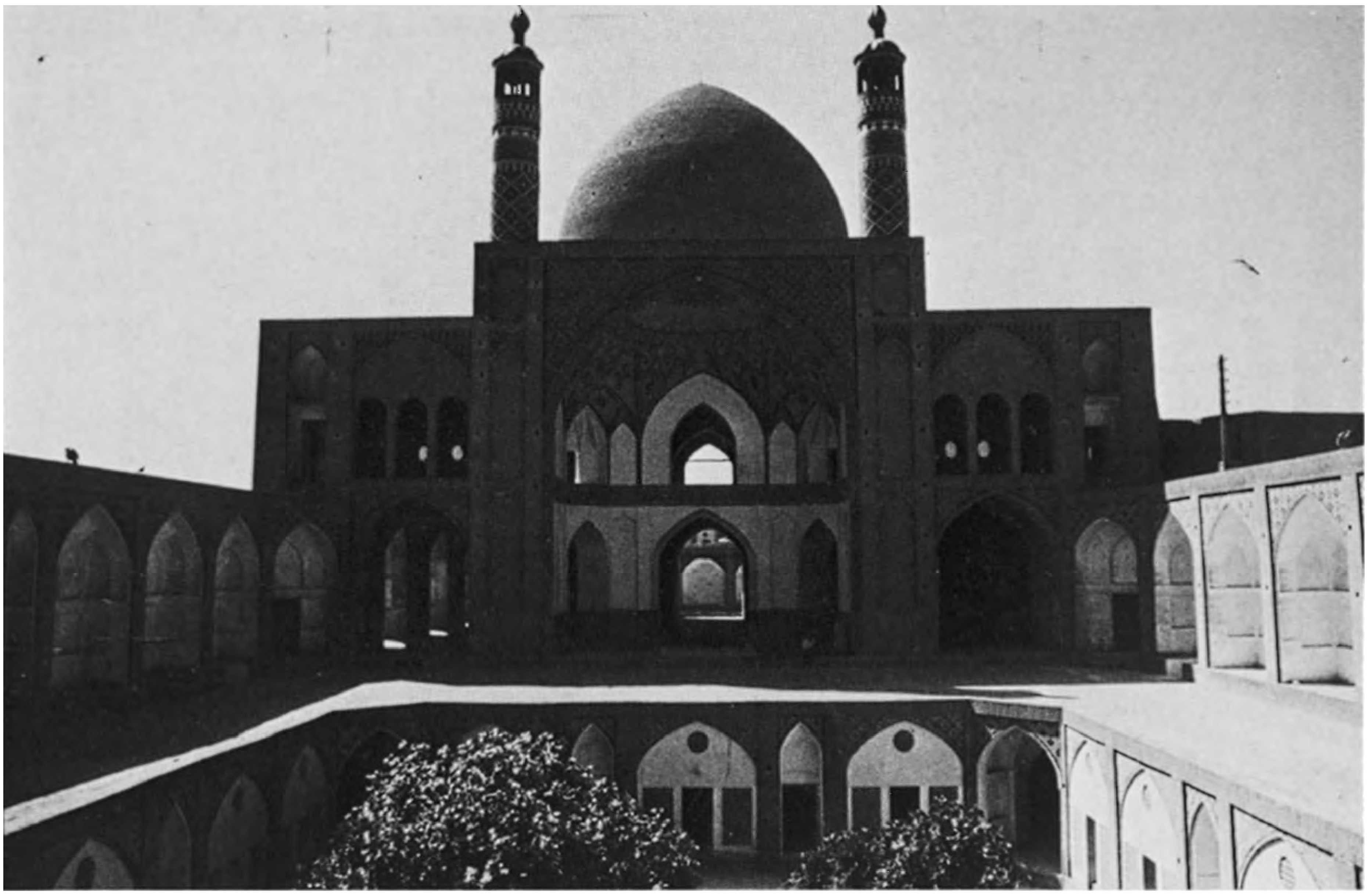
(*c*) Zanjān, Masjid-i Shāh, 1827–9. South *aivān*.



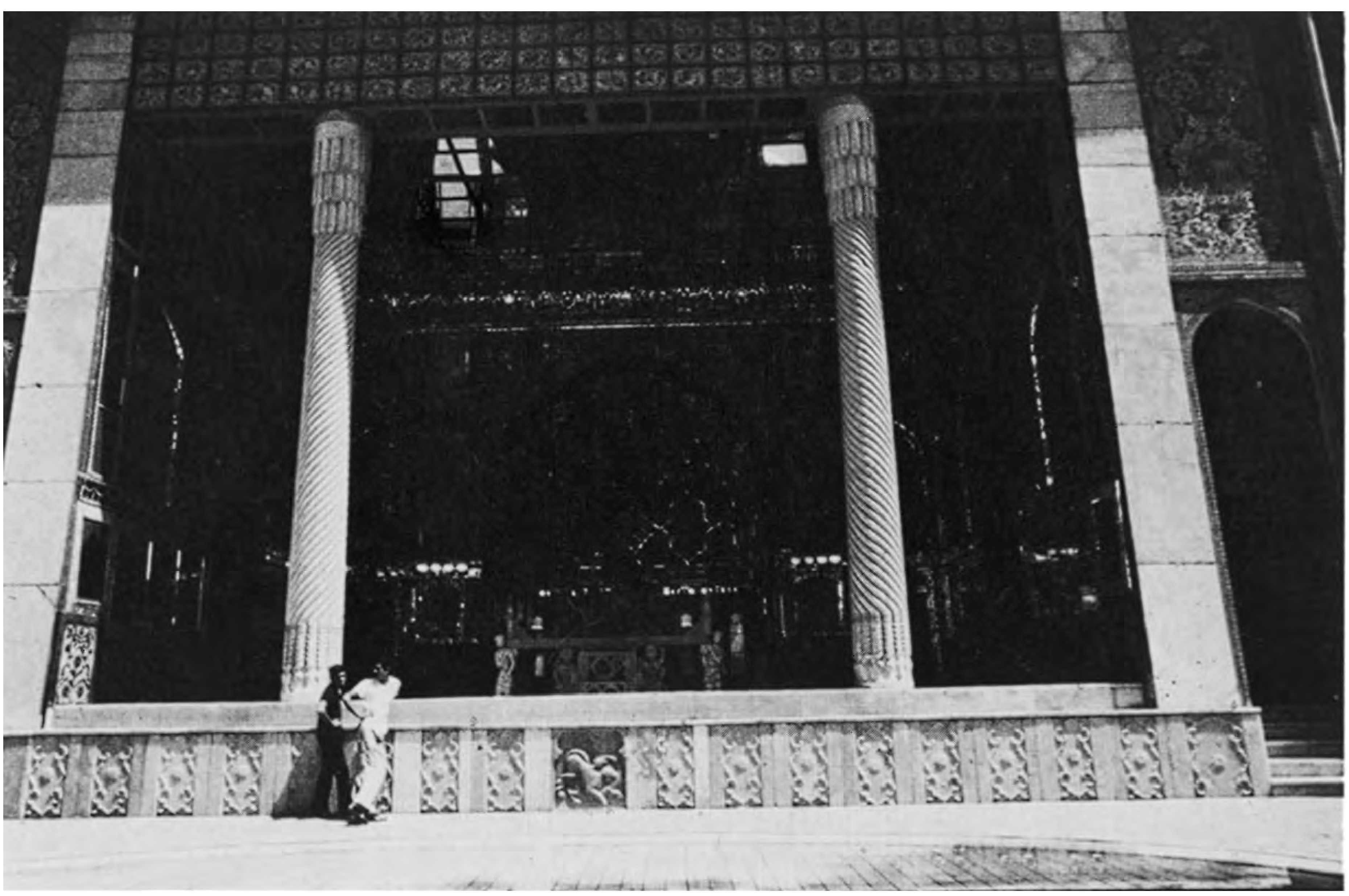
49 (*a*) Simnān, Masjid-i Shāh, 1828. North and west *aivāns.*



(*b*) Qazvīn, Masjid-i Sardār, 1815–16. South *aivān.*



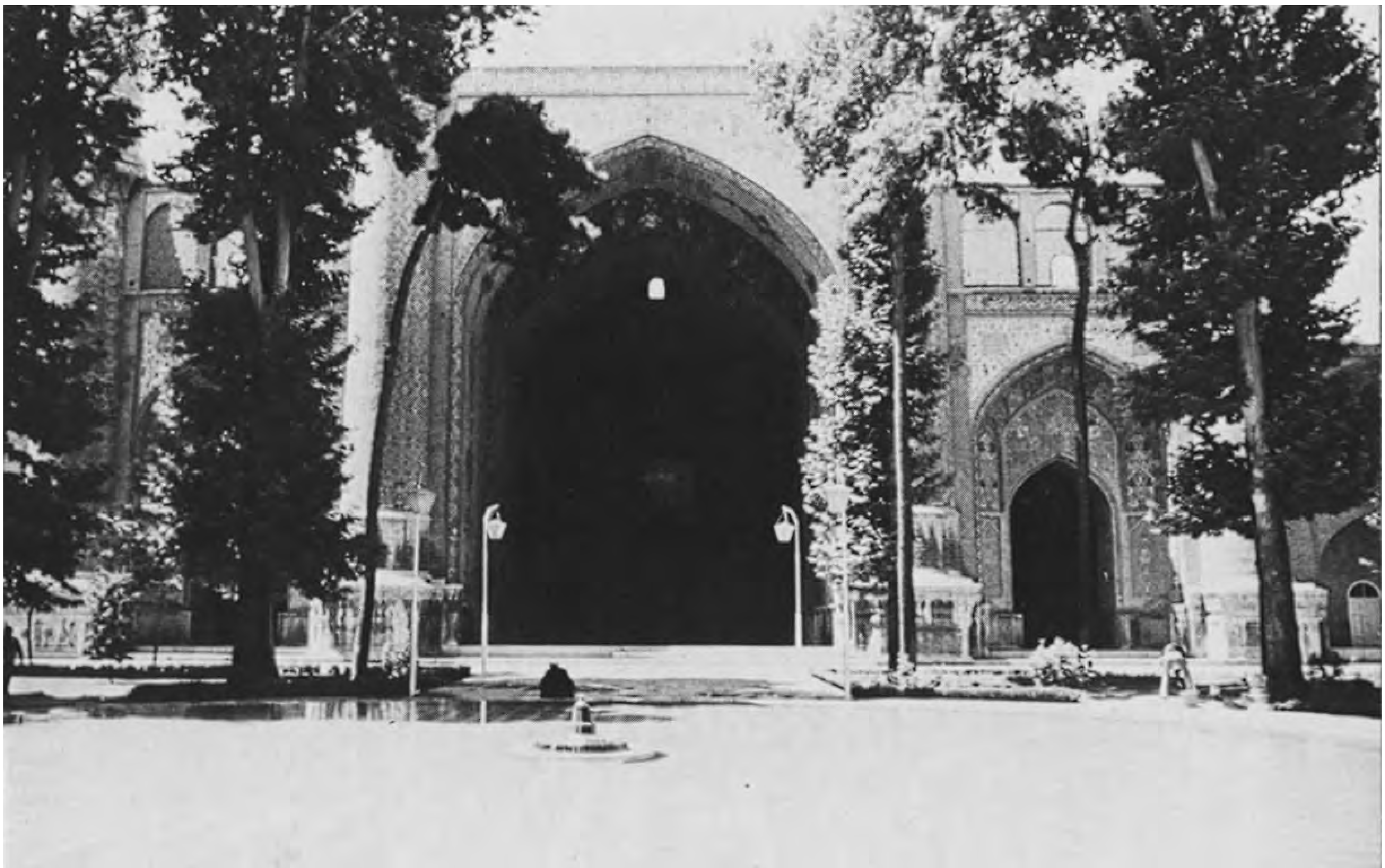
50 (*a*) Kāshān, Masjid-i Āghā Buzurg, 1832. South *aivān* and *zīrzamīn*.



(*b*) Tehran, Gulistān Palace. Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh's *dīvānkhāna*.



51 *(a)* Tehran, Masjid-i Sipahsālār, 1880–90. Entrance.



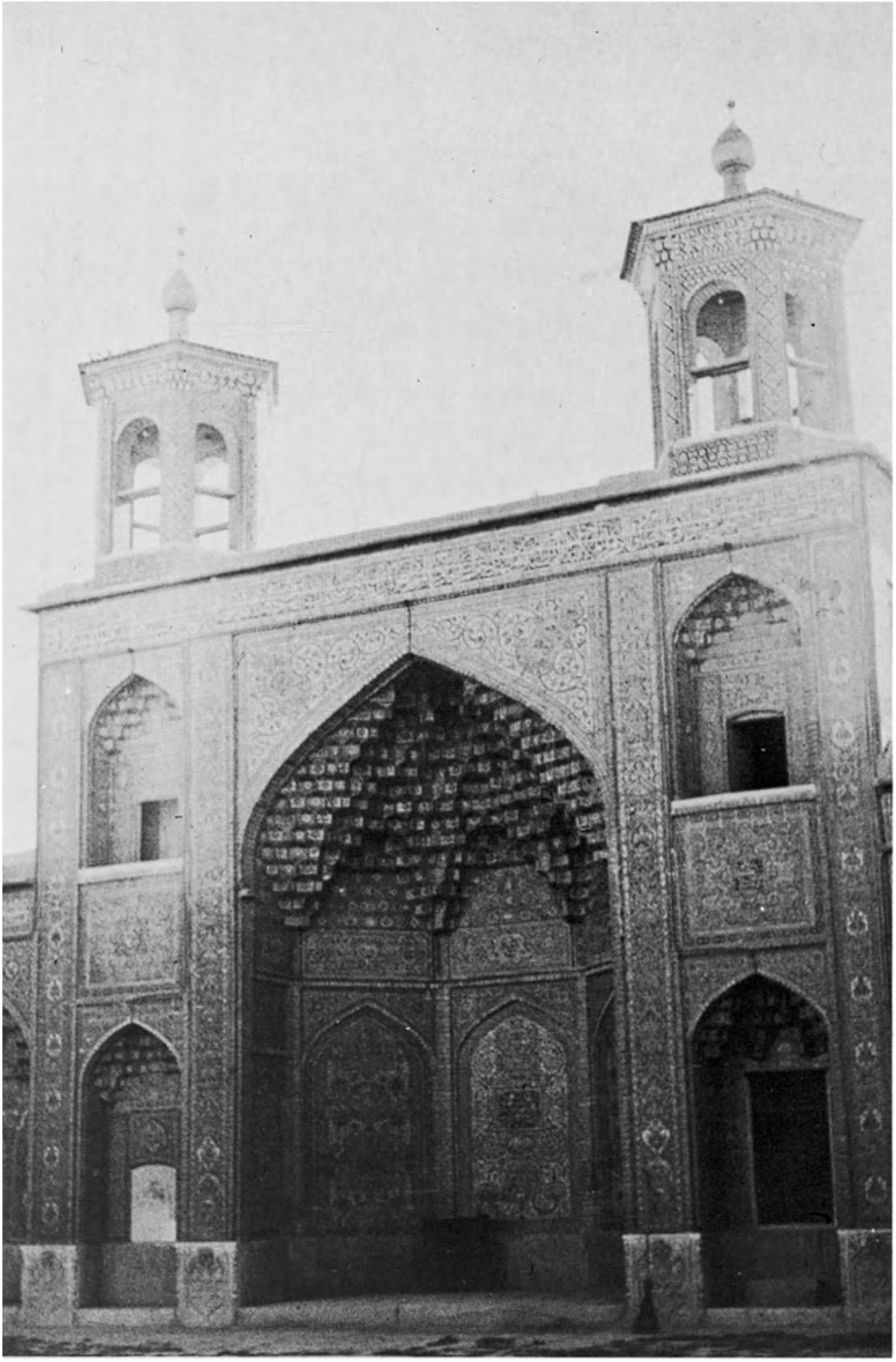
(b) Tehran, Masjid-i Sipahsālār. South *aivān*.



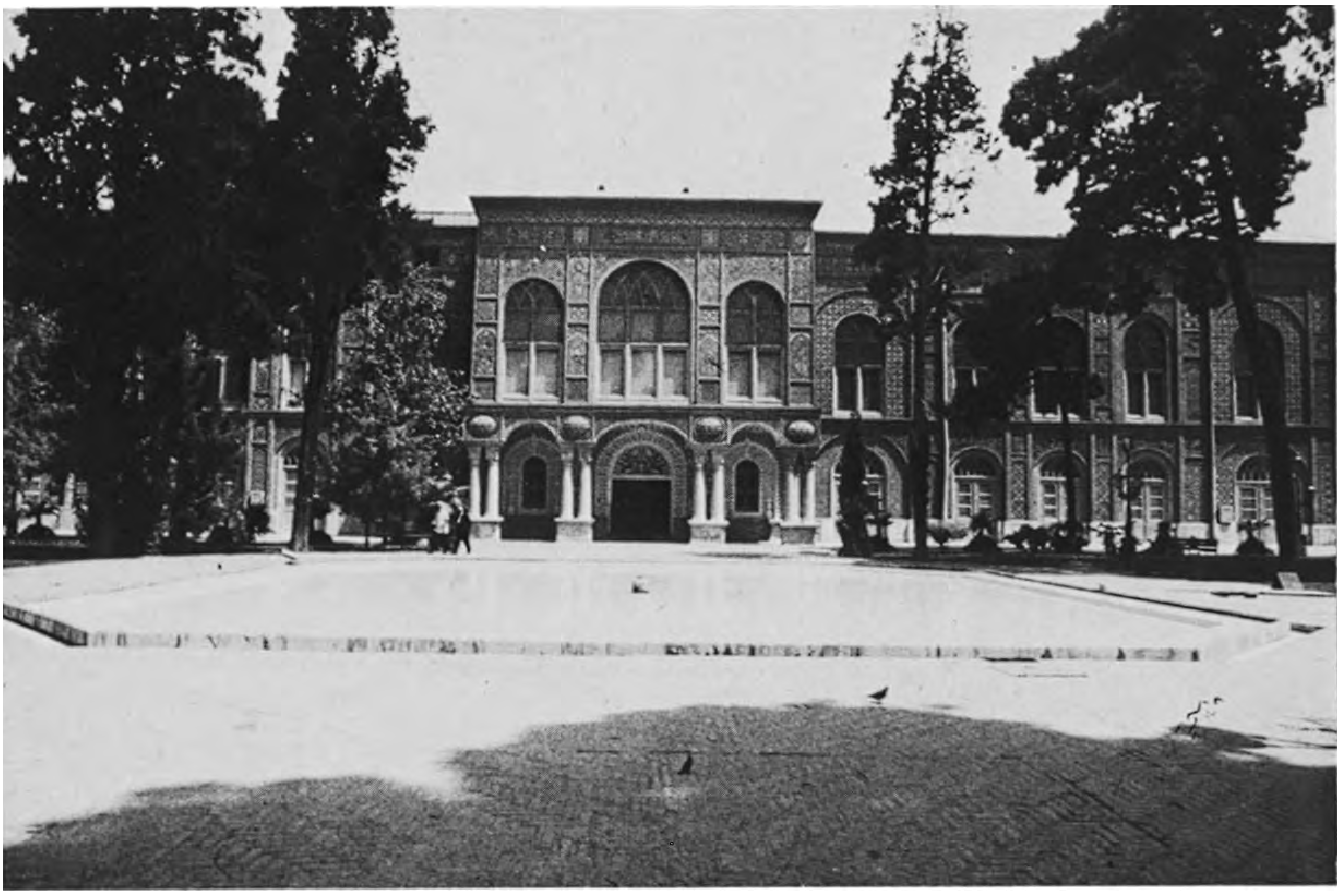
52 *(a)* Qazvīn, Shāhzāda Ḥusain, late 19th century. Façade of tomb enclosure.



(b) Tehran, Gulistān Palace. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's Shams al-ʿImārat, 1867. Oil painting of c. 1870.



53 Shīrāz, Masjid-i Naṣr al-Mulk, late 1876–88. South *aivān.*



54 *(a)* Tehran, Gulistān Palace. Façade of Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's audience hall, 1873–82.



(b) Environs of Tehran. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's summer palace of Salṭanatābād, 1888.



(c) Environs of Tehran. Nāṣir al-Dīn Shāh's summer palace of ʿIshratābād, 1882.



55 (*a*) Bowl, white composite paste painted in underglaze blue and black. Nāʾīn, 19th century.



(*b*) Bowl, earthenware tin glazed and painted polychrome overglaze enamels. Signed "ʿAlī Akbar of Shīrāz" and dated 1262/1846.



(*c*) Vase, white composite paste painted in underglaze blue. Tehran, c. 1887.



56 Candlestick, copper plated with silver. Formal design of animal and figure medallions worked in engraved and pierced openwork techniques.



57 (*a*) Vase, pinkish-buff composite paste painted in golden lustre over a white tin glaze, 19th century.



(*b*) Qalyān base, brass with figures and animal designs worked in repoussé and engraved techniques, 19th century.



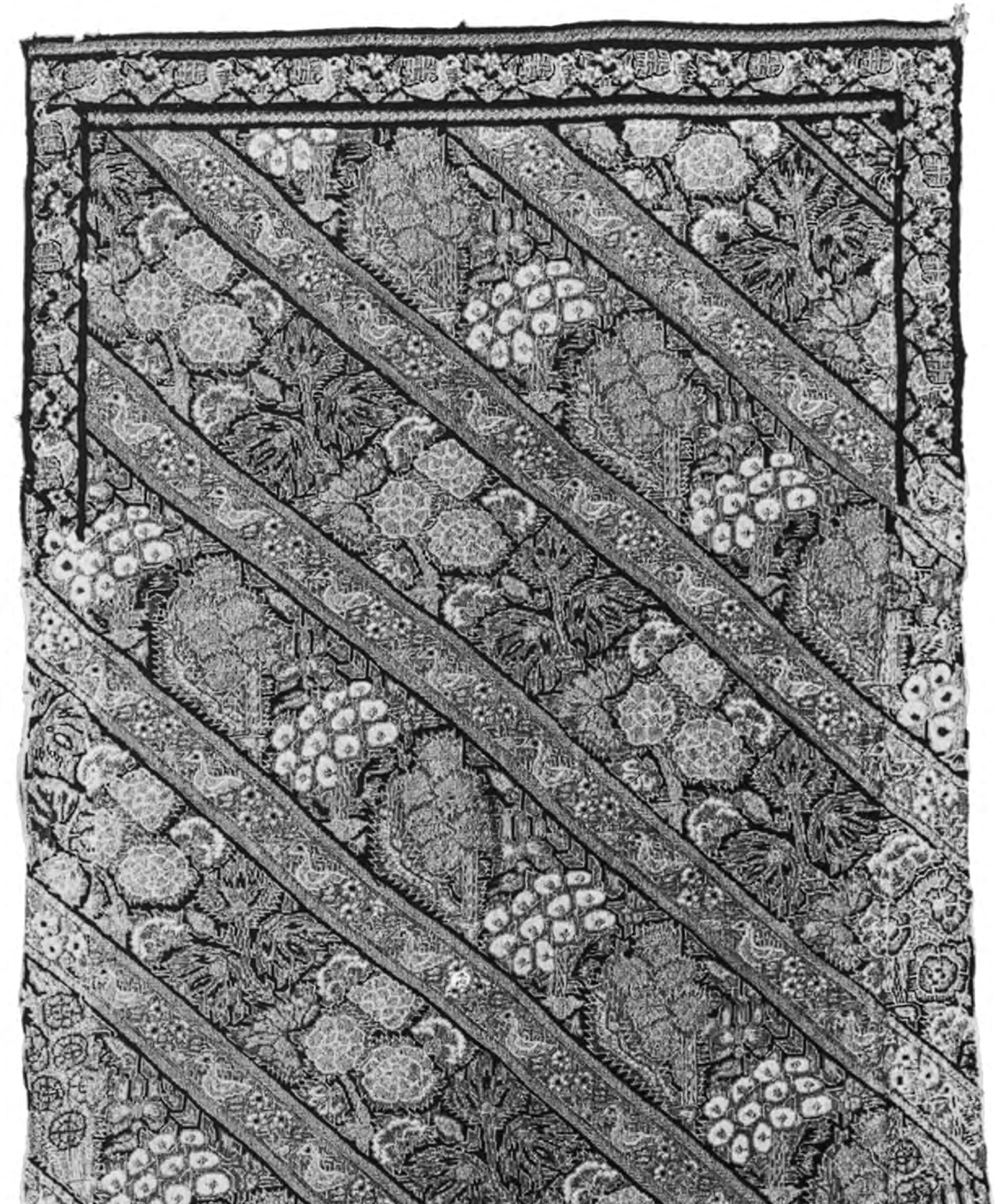
(*c*) Qalyān base, brass worked with repeated floral lattice in repoussé and engraved techniques, 19th century.



(*d*) Qalyān, brass worked with elaborate scheme of medallions containing figures in repoussé and engraved techniques.



58 Cover, cotton calico block printed with a formal medallion design. Iṣfahān, signed "work of Akbar ʿAlī" and dated 1292/1875.



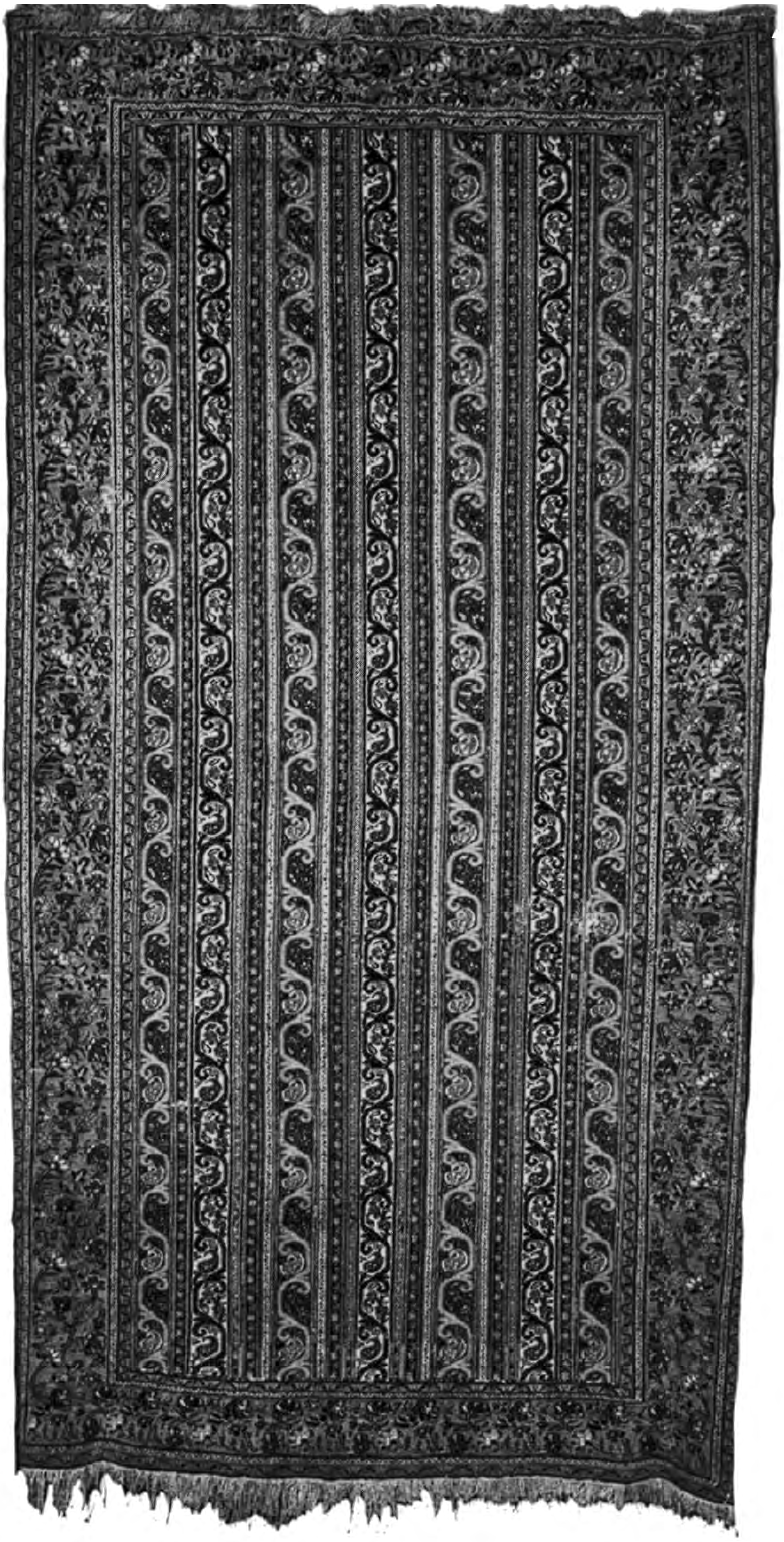
59 Piece of cotton for women's trousers embroidered with floral design in closely worked stitches in coloured silks, early 19th century.



60 Curtain worked with a portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh in wool patchwork and appliqué techniques. Rasht, 19th century.



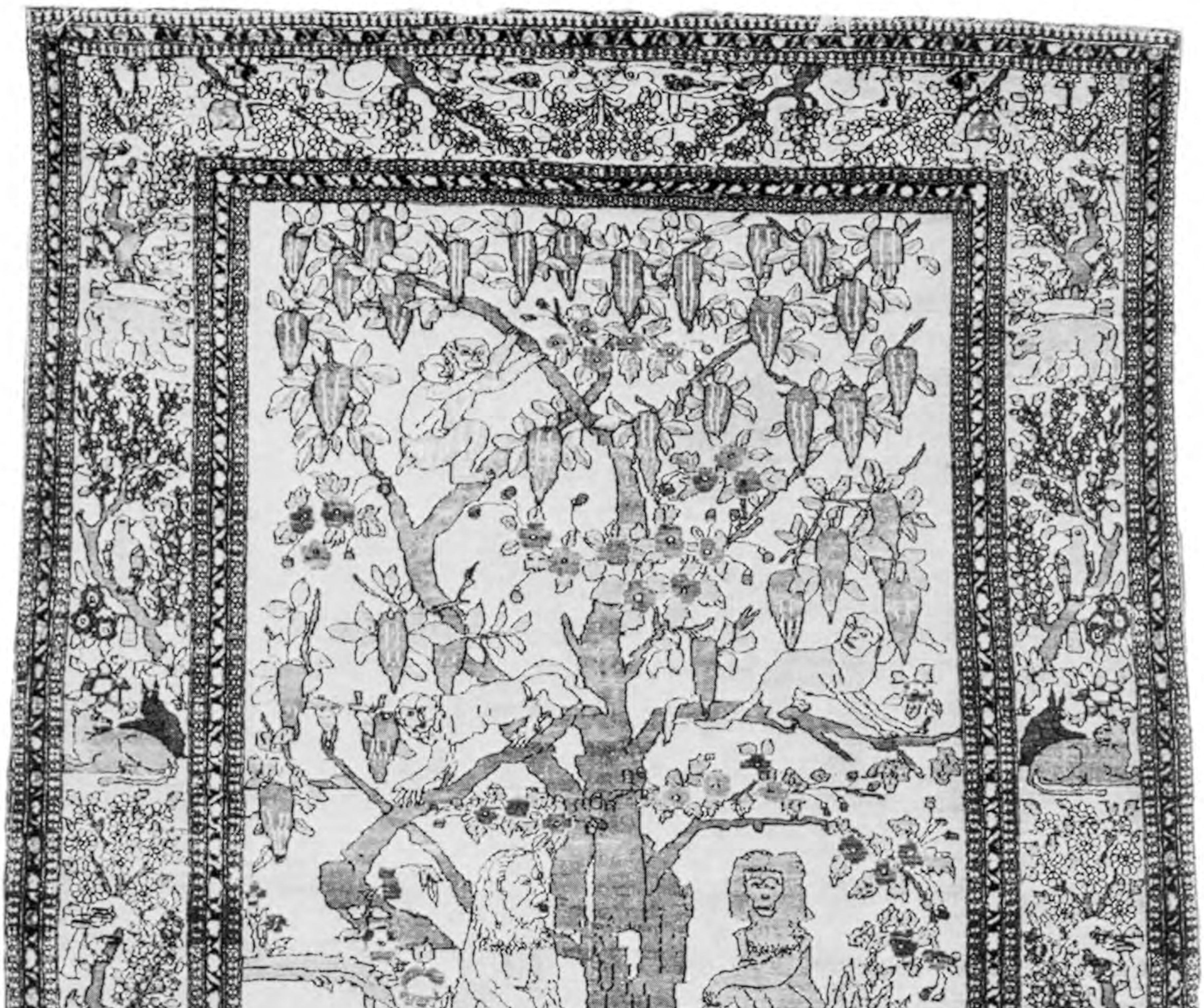
61 Carpet with knotted wool pile worked in a repeated palmette design. Farāghān, dated 1232/1817.



62 Carpet with knotted wool pile worked in vertical stripes of floral scroll. Mashhad, 1876.



63 Carpet with knotted wool pile worked in a pictorial design of Khusrau and Shīrīn watching dancers. Kāshān 1280/1853.



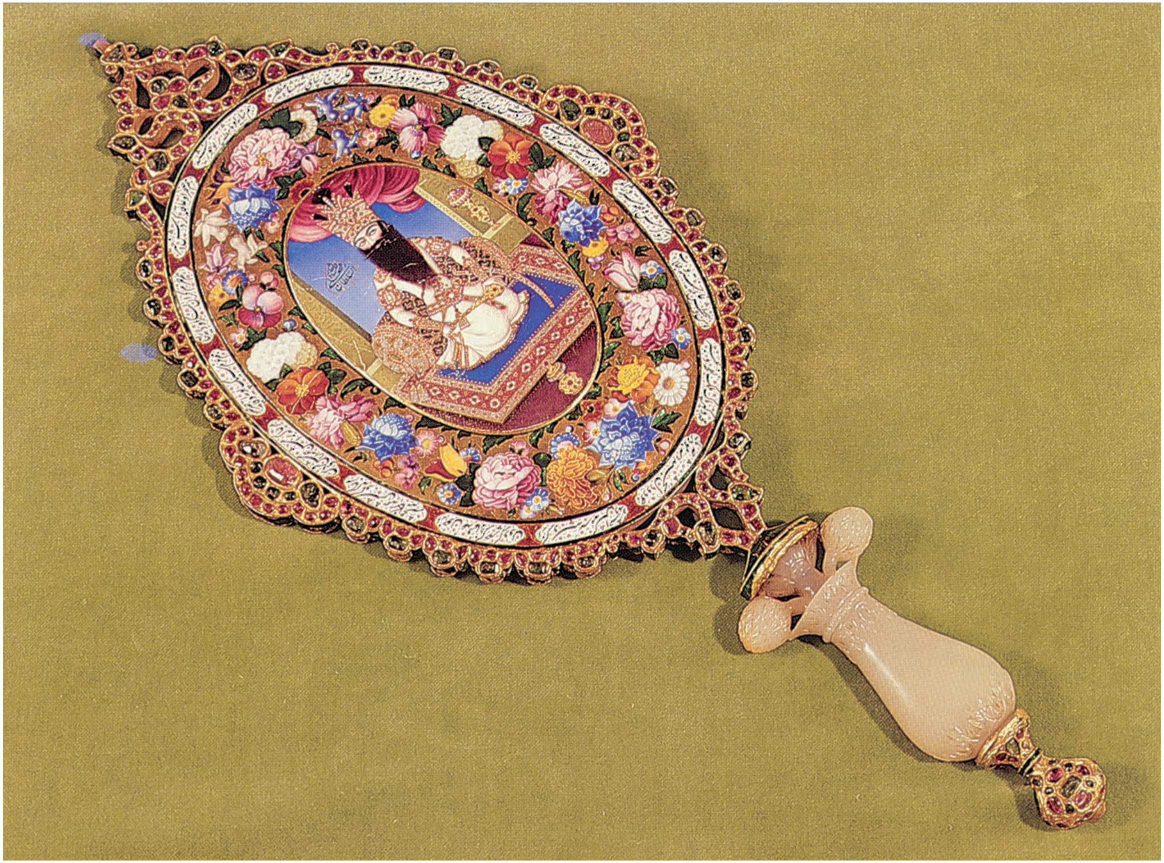
64 Carpet with knotted wool pile worked in a design of a traditional flowering tree sheltering exotic animals. Kāshān, late 19th century.



65 Portrait of Fatḥ ʿAlī Shāh, by Mihr ʿAlī.



66 Gold enamelled bowl, cover, saucer and spoon, by Bāqir.



67 Gold enamelled mirror with jade handle, by ʿAlī.



68 Mirror-case by Riżā al-Imāmī.